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Worlds of the Novel: The Representation of Reality in the Twentieth-Century Novel

by

Paul Duncan Morris ©

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Modern Languages and Comparative Studies

Edmonton, Alberta
Spring 1995

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Dedication

To my mother, Shirley Morris, with profound love and respect.

Abstract

The present study, *Worlds of the Novel: The Representation of Reality in the Twentieth-Century Novel*, documents the necessarily representational function of the novel form in an analysis of three novels of the twentieth-century. The first three chapters provide an articulation of the theoretical principles to be employed, while the final three chapters illustrate the implementation of these principles in the concrete examination of Maxim Gorky's *Mother*, James Joyce's *Ulysses* and Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*.

Chapter one establishes the groundwork for a concept of representation by distinguishing between realism and mimesis, two concepts intermittently employed to account for literature's relationship to reality. More historically expansive than realism's identification with a specific historic setting and more stylistically varied than mimesis, representation is proffered as a concept flexible enough to account for the twentieth-century novel's varied forms and subjects of depiction in the novel. Chapter two isolates the *familial* generic features of the novel which assure its representational function, while chapter three establishes an understanding of literature's relationship to its circumambient socio-historic setting and the principles required for a descriptive methodology of inquiry in literary history. The final three chapters demonstrate how Maxim Gorky's *Mother*, James Joyce's *Ulysses* and Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow* represent the socio-cultural settings of, respectively, socialist realism, modernism and postmodernism according to the structural features of the novel.

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Introduction

"The subject of this book, the interpretation of reality through literary representation or 'imitation,' has occupied me for a long time."[1] So Erich Auerbach began the "Epilogue" of his magisterial survey of the literary representation of reality from Homer to Virginia Woolf. Although the emphasis of this formulation is literary, Auerbach's intentions were equally historical: "My purpose is always to write history."[2] And indeed, given Auerbach's emphasis upon the inherently mimetic quality of all literature, the two categories of history and fiction are virtually inseparable. Literature, for Auerbach, is always a depiction of its era. It is indicative of Auerbach's study and the methodology chosen to implement it that Auerbach did not account for the absence of a specifically theoretical structure until the conclusion of some five hundred pages of text. Rather than constrain himself or his study with a specific methodology, Auerbach wished to plunge his reader immediately into the various texts examined and the literary, historical and social issues they raised.[3]

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[1] Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, trans. Willard Trask, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, [1946] 1974): 554.

[2] Erich Auerbach, *Literary Language and its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages*, trans. R. Mannheim, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1965): 20.

[3] Of course this methodology was also tempered by the conditions under which Auerbach wrote *Mimesis* as an exiled Jew in Istanbul during the final three years of the second world war. Geoffrey Green, *Literary Criticism and the Structures of History: Erich Auerbach and Leo Spitzer*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982).

The striking freshness and penetration of Auerbach's analysis of diverse texts from the history of western literature is in no small way a result of this approach. And despite the surface randomness and fragmentation of a study which moves across epochs, stylistic forms and national cultures unaided by a guiding structure, Auerbach's *Mimesis* is a masterpiece of synthesis and represents a profound understanding of western literature and its social history. This same effect of synthesis, comprehensive understanding and demonstrated application achieved by Auerbach motivates and inspires the present study of the representation of reality in the twentieth-century novel.

Motivates and inspires but only indirectly initiates. For the conditions and requirements of Auerbach's time of writing have changed significantly to effect altered understandings of the form and function of literature and its relationship to the world. Not for nothing is Auerbach identified in a description of the postmodern in the context of Arnold Toynbee's elegiac account of the passing of modernism and the birth of postmodernism, that which is said to be our own age and cultural condition.[4] Ultimately, then, the changed conditions of social and cultural life and especially of literary studies have prompted this attempt to re-assess the nature of the representation of reality in the twentieth-century novel. There are, of course, other factors which have caused this study to turn modestly from the letter, while adhering to the spirit, of Auerbach's work. Not the least of these is insufficient knowledge. Paradoxically, Auerbach's non-methodology assumes vast reserves of erudition, a foundation of non-schematic familiarity with the entire tradition which can buttress and support the weight of a variety of texts and topics. One means of coping with this admitted absence while at the same time fulfilling the conditions of contemporary scholarship is to provide an articulated methodology. Auerbach felt uncompelled to undertake "a tiresome search for definitions at the very beginning of [his] study" (556). The present study, conversely, does begin with such a "tiresome search" and even foregrounds this operation not simply to delimit the boundaries of an inquiry into a necessarily broad topic but also to demonstrate familiarity with the relevant issues surrounding the concept and to establish principles of repeatability. It is presumed within the principles of representation advocated in this study that the analysis of Maxim Gorky's *Mother*, James Joyce's *Ulysses* and Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow* as a means of illustrating the twentieth-century's representation of reality, its socio-cultural environment, ought to be repeatable in other novels.

---

[4] Thomas Docherty, "Postmodernism: An Introduction," 1-32, in *Postmodernism: A Reader*, ed. Thomas Docherty, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993): "Like the critic Erich Auerbach, who also wanted to validate the idea of a shared humanity in which 'below the surface conflicts,' 'the elementary things which our lives have in common come to light,' Toynbee sees that the 'modern' moment is not one of such universal harmony: both writers were writing under the sign of the Second World War' (2).

The present study, then, is concerned with providing a descriptive account of the representation of reality in the twentieth-century novel. The inclusion of the generic category of the novel in the historical period of the twentieth-century already limits the range of this account considerably. Auerbach, in search of a far bigger fish, cast a far broader net. He was interested in locating "serious realism" in textual moments of revolution against "the classical doctrine of levels of style" (554). The present work will concern itself with the novel and show in a structural definition of the novel that the conditions for the novel's necessary representation of the world are imbedded in its typological features. Relatedly, this inquiry does not have Auerbach's sweep of some three thousand years, but is confined to the twentieth-century. Given the historical range of Auerbach's purview, his text deals in epochs and eras. This analysis, contained as it is within the twentieth-century, is confined to communities of readers united in socio-culturally determined units. For reasons of continuity, this study employs movements, particularly those movements which function at the confluence of historical periods and literary-aesthetic modes of representation, as the particular socio-culturally defined units to be analyzed in conjunction with specific novels. Thus, although limited to an examination of the relationship between novels and reality expressed as historico-cultural movements, the principles utilized could be applied to other novels expressive of differing groupings of communal reality. It will be as a result of the unfortunate constraints of space that this study will not demonstrate the representation of reality in the novel in such other localized manifestations as the novel of overt ideological positions, issues of gender, aesthetic programmes, national or social self-identity etc. The examination of the representation of reality in the twentieth-century novel offered here will, while remaining informed by Auerbach's example, limit the range of discussion to the novel of three separate historico-cultural movements of the twentieth-century.

It was noted above that Auerbach's study of mimesis has been associated with an age and understanding of literature which has since been superseded by subsequent historical development and numerous accompanying studies of mimesis and approaches to literature. It is this context of continually developing perceptions of literary issues which warrants yet another discussion of so oft discussed a topic as the representation of reality in literature. Recent literary theory has witnessed a radical re-thinking of the concepts of mimesis and representation and of ancillary issues concerning the institution of literature, the function of the author and his or her relationship with the reader, the nature of genre, the periodization of literature and the function of language, to name but a few. Although the contemporary theoretical challenge to each of these issues is deeply implicated in a reassessment of representation, it will not be the design of the present inquiry to address directly the various expressions of these challenges according to each separate issue. Rather, this study will proceed with the development of a conception of representation in the twentieth-century novel which responds to various theoretical and pragmatic issues as they arise. Such an approach is offered as a pragmatic response to the difficulty of adequately treating each of the myriad concerns raised in conjunction with so elemental an issue as the literary representation of reality. For related reasons, it is hoped that the analysis of three novels representative of specific socio-cultural, socio-historic settings in the latter half of this inquiry will demonstrate in the place of arguing. This procedure is to recall the injunction of John Dewey to resist the temptation to assert *a priori*, causal forces in the analysis of social phenomena but rather to attend to the consequences.[5] In short, without answering directly to what might be termed the poststructuralist questioning of representation, this study will remain ever conscious of the issues raised by poststructuralism.

The present work will develop and demonstrate an account of representation in six two-part stages or chapters. Chapter one addresses the pivotal terms and concepts of realism and mimesis. The second chapter offers a descriptive, structural definition of the novel form. The third chapter tackles the hoary problem of literature's relation to reality and proffers a description of the methodology of the literary-historical analysis of novels to be employed in the remainder of this study. In the fourth chapter, socialist realism and Maxim Gorky's *Mother* are treated as an example of the novel's conscription into the overt representation of a socio-historical setting in ideological terms. Chapter five presents James Joyce's *Ulysses* as a representative novel of modernism. Finally, Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow* is shown to represent the contingent reality of postmodernism in chapter six.

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[5] See John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems*, (Chicago: The Swallow Press, [1927] 1954), particularly chapter one "Search for the Public" where Dewey sets forth a methodology for his inquiry into the nature of the American state.

Chapter one begins the present inquiry into the representation of reality in the novel with the assumption that no meaningful progress can be made concerning this concept until the related issues of realism and mimesis are addressed. Although highly problematic, as any historical review of their critical usage reveals, both terms seem all too often to be forced into monolithic, prescriptive functions as either the source of "real" art or the literary *bête noire* of aesthetically progressive forms. More curiously, both terms are often identified according to their relation to the presumed function of the other. Realism is presented as a perennial feature of all literature while mimesis is claimed operational only in the nineteenth-century novel. The concept of representation forwarded here, while maintaining the relatedness of the two concepts, separates the role of each to propose realism as the nineteenth-century expression of a larger mimetic function in literature. Indeed, the confusion which arises out of the misuse of both terms is alleviated with the application of the very historically, socially and generically based understanding of representation forwarded in this study. The concept of representation, while ensuring the connectedness of literature and reality, is unencumbered by monolithic identification with either its localized form of expression--realism--or with its perennial source in mimesis.

The mode of writing realism is identified with the historical and social context of the European nineteenth-century. An historical review of the definitions and usages of the aesthetic term realism are shown to partake of a general social and epistemological environment which may be located with other social developments in the nineteenth-century. The discussion of realism as a particularly nineteenth-century variant of a broader mimetic function provides the opportunity to address the issue of periodization which will be returned to in chapter three and demonstrated in the latter three chapters of this study. Since the present analysis is concerned with specific novels and their associated historico-cultural movements, the periodization emphasised here is on the broader scale of literature's and reality's dialectic, mutually defining relationship set in historical parameters. In a more general manner, however, the literary representation of reality need not be identified solely in such broad historico-cultural terms. The novelistic representation of reality may be perceived in more localized expressions of cultural communities. In avant-garde settings, for instance, the representation of reality in the novel may be expressive of the aesthetico-ideological goals declared by a specific movement and community in its manifestos, which in turn partake of a broader period. André Breton's surrealist novel *Nadja*, though representative of distinctive goals and intentions, could thus be identified as also expressive of the more generalized features of the wider period of modernism.

Upon proposing realism's identification with the socio-historic setting of the nineteenth-century, chapter one returns to the problem of mimesis as the source of realism's connectedness to reality. A brief historical review of the concept mimesis is offered both to indicate the historical variability of what is often assumed an immutable concept and to raise some of the issues implicated in the defense and criticism of mimesis. On the basis of Christopher Prendergast's *The Order of Mimesis* a three part review of mimesis is tendered, emphasizing positions which view mimesis as aesthetically and ideologically repressive, philosophically untenable as an aesthetic concept and finally, as the *creative* source of art. Here it will be possible to address aspects of those poststructuralist trends associated with such figures as Jacques Derrida and Roland Barthes which seek rigourously to deny the philosophic and aesthetic preconditions of mimesis before turning to a perception of mimesis as the pliant, inventive foundation of art. As a product of this latter understanding of mimesis, representation is ultimately proffered as a flexible concept which assures the continued depiction of external reality and which remains adaptive to evolving social and historical contexts. According to this conception, representation is derived from an understanding of mimesis as constant in its function though ever changing in its expression. Stated briefly, representation brings to mimesis the plurality of changing social and historical settings and an understanding of the formative power of genre.

Having established an understanding of realism and mimesis as the basis of representation, chapter two advances to a structural definition of the novel as the specific generic context of representation in this study. Before proceeding to a descriptive definition of the novel form, a brief account of the methodology to be used in this exercise is offered. Of primary importance here is Wittgenstein's notion of "familial resemblances." Employing this notion it is possible to utilize previous prominent examinations of the novel form by such theorists as Mikhail Bakhtin, Georg Lukács, Ian Watt, Walter Reed, Michael McKeon and others to isolate five central "resemblances," which, although variant in expression, remain constant within the novel family. The first two familial traits or "resemblances" concern the novel's unique engagement with the categories of time and space. The novel is characterized by its engagement with, and representation of, time as an affective, historically evolving process. Relatedly, the space which the novel occupies is that of the historical present as it develops. The environment depicted in the novel establishes and conditions the representation of character and plot. The third novelistic trait is that of plot. The plot of novels tends toward the representation of the new and inconclusive in reality, that which pertains to human experience rather than that previously represented myth. Fourthly, the novel is distinguished by its specifically novelistic use of character. Characters in the novel are conditioned by their engagement with their unfolding reality in a manner which priorizes the broadest representation of human life possible. Character in the novel constitutes a vehicle for particularizing events and human experience. Lastly, the novel utilizes language in a manner identifiable to that genre.

The issue of the novelistic use of language provides this study with the opportunity to diverge briefly from the specific issue of language in the novel to attend to the poststructuralist critique of language as the referential medium ensuring the representation of reality in literature and to establish the principles of language which will be demonstrated in the later examination of specific novels. Responsive to the theoretical tradition critical of any understanding of language as a transparent medium mirroring an exact correspondence between sign and signifier, Wittgenstein is called upon again to provide a theoretical framework with which to view language as a referential medium determined by its usage in linguistic communities. Emphasis is placed upon an understanding of language as a social construct created and implemented in communal settings. As with the formulation of a concept of representation, this approach to language attempts to accentuate its socially and historically contingent nature. This is of some theoretical importance. For although the social nature of language is never demonstrated in particularly radical examples of the novel in this study, the issue is of central importance in maintaining the repeatability of the principles of representation set forth here. For many novels representative of the reality of more localized communities use language in a manner specific to the ideological and aesthetic principles of that group.

Returning to a discussion of the particularly novelistic use of language, the novel is shown to priorize language as a means of communication and as a vehicle representative of the ideology of varying social groups. In terms of the literary system, the novel utilizes the languages not simply of differing social systems but also of differing genres and levels of style. Language in the novel is used to provide as full a representation as possible of the reality from which the novel is derived. Through the use of language, the novel depicts the widest purview of social groupings possible and with them an accompanying breadth of human experience.

The above five categories of the novelistic use of time, space, plot, character and language are shown to combine in a genre which is especially conducive to the representation of reality. The novel is a genre characterized by a quality of epistemological inquisitiveness which lends it to the representation of ever changing historical and social contexts. It is thus proposed that the twentieth-century, a century of changing conceptions of reality and of particularized ideological visions located in discernible social and cultural groupings, will contain a wide array of novel types. Uniting them all, and discernible according to the principles of this inquiry, is the representation of reality via the generic features of the novel form.

Before addressing the representational strategies employed in three exemplary novels, however, it will be necessary to return to yet another foundational issue in any discussion of the relationship between literature and reality. Chapter three occupies itself with the description of reality and the nature of literature's relationship with reality. This subject leads to the topic of the second half of this chapter which concerns the delineation of a methodology which will consistently allow an accurate examination of novels in their historical and social settings, their reality. Following the lead of Mikhail Bakhtin and Pavel Medvedev in their *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship* the social identity of reality is emphasized. Literary texts are identified as important examples of the semiotic material by which humans construct their social systems. In the instance of literature the mutually influencing interaction between literature and its social setting is expressed in a dialectic whereby literature simultaneously influences, and is influenced by, the broader literary system and external reality. In turn, external reality is itself influenced by other external social systems and previous forms of literature. According to this formulation, literature is intrinsically bound up with the characteristics and features of its social, historic and ideological environment.

The interconnectedness of this dialectic between social and literary processes has specific consequences for the analysis of even such individual works of art as novels. For given the mutual identification of the literary and social systems from which novels derive, the study of a portion of one presumes familiarity with the relevant aspects of the other. Obviously, such a project would very quickly assume proportions beyond the scope of the requirements of most analyses of individual novels. Some form of methodology is required, then, to establish relevant principles for sifting through the novel's relatedness to its social environment. The second half of the fourth chapter thus concerns itself with organising a methodology which may be used wholly or in part, depending on the nature of the literary work and its specific relation to its social setting, to relate novels to their environments. As this study is intended to argue the theoretical applicability of the concept of representation as well as to demonstrate it in specific novels, the theoretical position articulated here is more inclusive and general than that actually utilized in the later analysis of three novels. Nonetheless, the particular methodology employed to examine *Mother*, *Ulysses* and *Gravity's Rainbow* is derived from this broader approach.

The methodology forwarded here and intended for application outside of this particular study is informed by the work of Dominick LaCapra and Jerome J. McGann. Essentially, five central fields of inquiry are advanced as categories from which the fullest understanding of the relationship of any single novel to its social and historical setting may be ascertained. The categories are one, authorial intention; two, authorial motivation or, the relationship between the author's life and the text; three, the immediate cultural context of the novel, its "community of discourse" or network of aesthetic and/or ideological associations; four, the relationship between an individual work and the broader literary system understood as an entire literary tradition or simply the remaining corpus of the author's work; and five, the formal or structural nature of the novel. Depending on the motivation predicating the study of any single novel, these categories may be used individually or as a group depending upon the depth of analysis required. Given this study's interest in the relationship between literature and reality expressed by way of social and cultural periods, the primary categories used in the analysis of the final chapters are three and five, the network of cultural and literary associations and the formal structure. Nonetheless, all of the above categories are shown to play a role in demonstrating the novel's representation of reality.

The final three chapters are intended to consolidate the understanding of the representation of reality in the twentieth-century novel through an analysis of three novels supposed to be representative of three cultural historical periods. Socialist realism and Maxim Gorky's *Mother*, modernism and James Joyce's *Ulysses* and finally postmodernism and Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow* are discussed according to the same central two-part methodology. In each instance the relevant period concept is defined and then shown to be represented in corresponding exemplary novels according to the five familial categories of the novel noted above. The discussion of socialist realism and *Mother* begins this three part examination as the historical predecessor of the other two periods and the movement which succeeds realism. Although based on a realist aesthetic and derived from a literary tradition dominated by the novel, socialist realism is shown to portray not reality but reality's sublimation into an ideology thereby representing the peculiarly ideologized culture of the Soviet Union. Each of the familial traits of the novel are effected by and represent the reigning ideology of this socio-cultural period of the Soviet Union. The examination of modernism and *Ulysses* confirms this novel's representation of modernist culture's uncertainty regarding the depiction of reality and the attempt to provide a surrogate order in place of this uncertainty. Modernist society's culture of epistemological uncertainty is reflected throughout *Ulysses*. In the final chapter on postmodernism and *Gravity's Rainbow*, the radical, ontological uncertainty of postmodern culture is demonstrated to pervade every aspect of Pynchon's novel. Taken together, the three novels examined exhibit the manner in which reality is represented in the novel form in general. Combined with the theoretical premises outlined in the first three chapters in this study, they witness the applicability of a concept of the representation of reality to the novel of the twentieth-century in particular.

Chapter 1

Representation: Between Mimesis and Realism

Any study which takes as its avowed task an account of representation as the aesthetic feature which would ensure the perennial connectedness of the novel and the world must confront a daunting host of critical issues. In essence, such an undertaking constitutes the immodest attempt to provide an ontological argument for the nature of fiction--in this study, the novel--which presumes and affects a particular understanding of the very form, function and purpose of literature. In assuming so broad an understanding and range of issues, conceptual abstractions and a broad critical perspective are to be presumed. Of immediate concern, because no critical study is undertaken outside of its own history, such a study must acquaint itself with the conceptual strategies already enacted which attempt to provide for or, conversely, dispute the connectedness of fiction and reality. Relatedly it must attempt to justify its own unique perception and manipulation of a combination of these concepts as they are derived from their myriad synchronic and diachronic definitions to be developed into a new practicable whole. Such will be the task of this first chapter in a study devoted to an examination of representation in the twentieth-century novel: to sort through various critical descriptions of the foundational aesthetic concepts of realism and mimesis to arrive at a clearer understanding of these terms as the basis for representation. This task is of special importance as both terms have often been identified with the function of the other. Supporters of realism seem at times to suggest a perennial quality to the nineteenth-century novel, a particular confluence of an aesthetic tradition and socio-historic context. Conversely, detractors of mimesis have attempted to confine the mimetic function of literature to the nineteenth-century realist novel.

Realism will be presented as a multi-faceted and therefore complex term which, despite its frequent applications as a term of trans-historical applicability, is best considered as an historically based movement within the confines of a single period, a single cultural or epistemic configuration. The confinement of realism to a period is not to submit the realist function to the *reductio ad absurdum* proffered by such as R. Jakobson in his "On Realism in Art" but rather to conform to a principle inherent in the very concept of representation which is being established.[1] In confining realism to a period, the descriptive uses associated with the oft employed adjective "realistic" are not being ignored, rather the concept is being assigned a perhaps more efficient division of labour. Thus, the critically older term mimesis will assume its traditional role of accounting for literature's imitative relationship with reality. Of course mimesis is not to be accepted naively, oblivious to the various recent critical attacks launched upon the order of mimesis. Indeed, it will be a critical awareness of the historic variability of such a seemingly immutable concept, coupled with the socio-historic specificity of the mimetic urge expressed in the realist movement, which will help to demonstrate the necessity of a more critically flexible and responsive concept--representation. Such are the concerns of realism and mimesis. Out of this foundational or ontological understanding of mimesis and realism, and in combination with a later chapter's discussion of the more structural requirements of the novel form and language, representation will be presented as a term responsive to the task of accounting for the novel's perennial relatedness to shareable reality. Simultaneously, representation will be shown to demonstrate the flexibility required to allow it to accommodate the novel's seemingly paradoxical acceptance of diverse and even conflicting expressions of this shareable reality. Thus, and this will be practically demonstrated in the later stages of this study, representation will emerge as a concept capable of providing for the novel's connection with reality in a continuum of novelistic styles from socialist realism to postmodernism.

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[1] See R. Jakobson, "On Realism in Art," (O xudozestvennom realizme,") in *Readings in Russian Poetics*, eds., L. Matejka and K. Pomorska, (MIT Press: Cambridge, 1971).

1. The Realist Period of Representation:

Given the oft noted polemic surrounding the concept of realism, its recurring appearance in discussions of literary theory and practice and the range of virtues and transgressions attributed to it, care in approaching the topic of realism is warranted. The prospective critic is immediately confronted with a potential source of critical confusion, for instance, in realism's triple existence in the vocabularies of philosophy, literary criticism and everyday (epistemologically naive?!) usage.[2] Though vexing enough, this conceptual multiplicity is further complicated by historical variations in usage and ultimately rendered aesthetically distasteful by realism's conscription in the creation of numerous critical neologisms.[3] Even limiting the term primarily to the sphere of literary theory, one must distinguish in what way precisely the term is to be used, what it is to designate: a method, describing a mode of writing, technique or compositional attitude employed in a work of art; as a designation, describing an individual artist utilizing or demonstrating such an attitude; or, finally, as a regulative concept defining the norms and attitudes maintained by a movement or group of writers. Cognizant and respectful of the difficulties thus outlined, it would appear worthwhile initially to begin *in medias res*, to allow an historical examination of the term to demonstrate how realism developed in the socio-cultural context which first used the term extensively. The primary value of such a strategy is to avoid the prescriptive and evaluative conditions inherent in later totalizing critical perspectives on realism.[4]

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[2] See J. P. Stern, *On Realism*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973): 33-43.

[3] See D. Grant, *Realism*, (London: Metheun, 1970): 1.

The genealogy of the term realism finds it initially in a philosophical context diametrically opposed to its contemporary designation as a concept of broadly materialist orientation. Until the eighteenth-century, realism functioned as a scholastic doctrine asserting the existence of universals and was held in opposition to nominalism which maintained that such universals had no existence beyond their names. As René Wellek notes, this original philosophical understanding likely changed in the course of eighteenth-century semantic and philosophical transformations.[5] Indicative of this eighteenth-century reversal is Thomas Reid's *Principles of Common Sense* of 1764 which took its place expressive of a growing tendency to view "things" and "facts" as objectively existent, external and independent of the perceiving subject.[6]

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[4] For an example of a more recent, polemical discussion of realism, the creation of a *straw man* argument see A. Lee *Realism and Power: Postmodern British Fiction*, (London: Routledge, 1990).

[5] René Wellek, "The Concept of Realism in Literary Scholarship," *Neophilologus* 44 (1961): 3.

As a term of literary criticism, realism gained currency among the German romantics in the wake of Kant's 1790 *Critique of Judgement* (*Kritik der Urteilskraft*) which established the durable critical antithesis between "realism" and "idealism."[7] Although Kant's opposition between realism and idealism was maintained in subsequent discussion, the term realism was not as yet located in a specific definition of a mode of writing or in reference to particular writers. In a 1798 letter to Goethe, for instance, Schiller adopts Kant's broad antithesis to distinguish the proper function of fiction and finds realism wanting, though for still nebulous reasons: "Es ist eine ganz andere Operation, das Realistische zu idealisieren, als das Ideale zu realisieren, und letzteres ist der eigentliche Fall bei freien Fiktionen."[8] Similarly, in a later letter to Goethe of the same year, Schiller identified the realist strain in French writers (in opposition to idealism) and isolated it as proof that "realism cannot make a poet:" "Das ist keine Frage, daß sie (the French) bessere Realisten als Idealisten sind, und ich nehme daraus ein siegendes

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[6] See Grant, *op. cit.*, 4. and J. Passmore, *A Hundred Years of Philosophy*, (London: Gerald Duckworth, 1957): 175, as well as A. McDowell, *Realism : A Study in Art and Thought*, (London: Constable and Company, 1918): 207 *passim*.

[7] See both Wellek, *op. cit.*, 3 and Stern, *op. cit.*, 38.

[8] Cited in E. B. O. Borgerhoff, "Réalisme and Kindred Words: Their Use as Terms of Literary Criticism in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century," *PMLA* 53 (1933): 840-41.

Argument, daß der Realismus keinen Poeten machen kann."[9] Further, in seeming opposition to Schiller, though still maintaining Kant's antithesis, Friedrich Schlegel asserts: "all philosophy is idealism and there is no true realism except that of poetry."[10]

Not surprisingly, Vissarion Belinsky's Russian adaptations of German Romantic thought indicate similar notions. Although greatly influenced by the German intellectual tradition, Belinsky nevertheless modified the concepts of his German mentors in 1835 to indicate literature's necessary relationship with the world of human experience and realism's identification with the social spirit of his age:

> Is it surprising, after this, that this realistic trend in poetry, this close union of art with life has developed primarily in our time? Is it surprising that the distinct characteristics of the newest works of literature in general is a merciless frankness, ...
>
> We demand not the ideal of life, but life as it is. Be it good or bad, we do not wish to adorn it, for we think that in poetic presentation it is equally beautiful in both cases precisely because it is true, and that where there is truth, there is poetry.... Thus poetry may be divided into the *idealistic* and the *realistic*. It would be difficult to decide which of these to give preference. Perhaps each is equal to the other, when it satisfies the conditions of a work of art, that is, when the *idealistic* poetry harmonizes with feeling, and the *realistic* with the truth of life-as-presented-by-it. But it seems that the latter, born as a result of the spirit of our sober time, satisfies the prevailing demands more completely.

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[9] *Ibid.*, 841.

[10] Cited in Wellek, *op. cit.*, 3.

> Here individuality of taste is also very significant. But however that may be, in our time both *idealistic* and *realistic* poetry are equally possible, equally accessible and understandable to all; notwithstanding this, the latter is the poetry of our time *par excellence*, more understandable and accessible to all, more in agreement with the spirit and needs of our time.[11]

By deferring to a kind of *Zeitgeist*, Belinsky is able subsume his prescriptive views in a quasi-objective, descriptive concept which allows him simultaneously to indicate and yet avoid the polemical issues which will mark discussions of realism in less than a generation. Of further interest, given the requirements made of literature by what Belinsky saw as the "spirit and needs of our time," the novel form seemed to him the most suitable genre precisely because of its ability to accommodate the diversity of human life and experience. Once again, from Belinsky's 1835 "O Russkoi Povesti i Povestiakh Gogolia:"

> And thus, the form and conditions of the novel are more suitable for the poetic representation of man examined in relation to social life, and that, it seems to me, is the secret of its unusual success and incontrovertible dominance.[12]

In this article, then, Belinsky had not as yet delineated a particular school or movement but rather a mode of writing which was seen to be responding to the changing requirements of his time. For Belinsky, "realistic poetry" is not particularly a method to be advocated but an evolving feature witnessed in the works of such romantic writers as Schiller. Realism is thus presented as a feature developing out of romanticism in response to new socio-historic conditions. Only later would Belinsky abandon his right-Hegelian position to lend his critical influence to the creation of a normative prescription for realism in the Russian social and literary context.

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[11] V. G. Belinsky, "On Realistic Poetry," quoted in G. J. Becker, *Documents of Modern Literary Realism*, (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1963): 42.

[12] Vissarion G. Belinsky, "O Russkoi Povesti i Povestiakh Gogolia," *Izbrannie Filosofskie Sochineniia*, Vol. 1., eds., M.I. Iobchyka and Z.V. Smirnovo, (Moskva: Gos. Izd. Pol. Lit., 1948): 173, my translation.

In this respect, both in Germany and Russia of the first half of the nineteenth-century, realism is observed as a mode of writing identified with neither specific writers nor a particular movement. Much the same is the case in England where, although the realist mode of writing was early in evidence in much English Romanticism, realism took longer to congeal into a critically articulated concept or defined movement. The term "realist" was not used in England until as late as 1851 in *Fraser's Magazine* and not with critical precision until an article on Balzac in an 1853 edition of *Westminster Review*. The English philosopher and intellectual mentor of George Eliot, G.H. Lewes, attempted in 1858 to use the term programmatically as the basis for all art:

> Art always aims at the representation of Reality, i.e. of Truth; and no departure from Truth is permissible, except such as inevitably lies in the nature of the medium itself. Realism is thus the basis of all Art, and its antithesis is not Idealism, but *Falsism*.[13]

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[13] G.H. Lewes, "Realism in Art: Recent German Fiction," *Westminster Review* 70 (1858): 271-87.

Thus the critical reaction to, and literary acceptance of, realism in England was gradual, noticeably lacking in the aesthetic revolutions of French literary and critical practice:

> Im Gegensatz zu Frankreich, wo das Aufkommen des Realismus auch als programmatische Abwendung von den traditionellen ästhetischen Maßstäben zu werten ist, knüpfte der Realismus, wie er sich in England entwickelte, ohne revolutionäres Selbstverständnis an vergangene Kunstformen an.[14]

The process by which realism solidifies out of the liquidity of a mode of writing found in certain romantic writing into the regulative concept of a movement defined and criticized in opposition to romanticism and classicism is best observed in the literary history of France. In the French context, the term realism is first encountered in an uncannily prescient comment from the *Mercure français du XIXème siècle* of 1826 (XIII, 6):

> Cette doctrine littéraire qui gagne tous les jours du terrain et qui conduirait à une fidèle imitation non pas des chefs-d'oeuvre de l'art mais des originaux que nous offre la nature, pourrait fort bien s'appeler *le réalisme*: ce serait suivant quelques apparences, la littérature dominante du XIXe siècle, la littérature du vrai.[15]

Despite the emphasis placed upon realism's dominance of the nineteenth-century and its concern for an imitation of nature as the literature of truth, the above quote should not be construed as indicative of an already determined doctrine, an uncontested field of literary opinion and practice. Nor is it possible simply to posit the subsequent developments of realism in opposition to those of romanticism as a reaction to the earlier movement.[16] For while such a strategy simplifies the placement of realism into a specific literary-historical period after romanticism, it does so at the expense of ignoring the conceptual indebtedness of realism to romanticism noted in the above discussion of the Russian and English developments of realism.[17] Philippe van Tieghem, for instance, observes laconically: "Le Romantisme contenait en germe le Réalisme."[18] Similarly, Bernard Weinberg, in his encyclopaedic account of realism's presence in nineteenth-century French critical writing, notes that a comprehensive history of realistic theory:

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[14] S. Kohl, *Realismus: Theorie und Geschichte*, (München: Wilhelm Fink, 1977): 90.

[15] Cited in E.B.O. Borgerhoff, *op. cit.*, 839.

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[16] Such an approach is latent in Wellek's discussion of realism. See Wellek, *op. cit.*, 17.

[17] In the French context, one might conveniently cite Stendhal's polemics with the classicists on behalf of a romanticism understood as rooted firmly in the social and political events of the first quarter of the nineteenth-century. See M. de Stendhal, *Racine et Shakespeare. Études sur le romantisme,* (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1970): "*Lanfranc ou le Poète* est une comédie romantique, parce que les événements *ressemblent* à ce qui se passe tous les jours sous nos yeux. Les auteurs, les grands seigneurs, les juges, les avocats, les hommes de lettres de la trésorerie, les espions, etc., qui parlent et agissent dans cette comédie, sont tels que nous les rencontrons tous les jours dans les salons; pas plus affectés, pas plus *guindés* qu'ils ne le sont dans la nature, et certes c'est bien assez. Les personnages de la comédie classique, au contraire, semblent affublés d'un double masque, d'abord l'effroyable affectation que nous sommes obligés de porter dans le monde, sous peine de ne pas atteindre à la considération, plus l'affectation de noblesse, encore plus ridicule, que le poète leur prête de son chef en les traduisant en vers alexandrins" 102.

[18] P. van Tieghem, *Petite Histoire des grandes doctrines littéraires en France*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de Paris, 1946): 215.

> ...would have to go at least as far back as the eighteenth century, to the formulations of Diderot. It would then be necessary to trace in romantic credos and manifestos the development of certain contentions which eventually formed the basis of the realistic gospel.[19]

While in a like gesture, David Sauvageot delineates within romanticism proper a "romantisme objectif, qu'on pourrait appeler le romantisme réaliste ou encore romantisme d'observation" providing the critical differentiation necessary to accommodate novelists such as Stendhal and Balzac on the borders of, while simultaneously in, both romanticism and realism.[20] The above caveat concerning realism's indebtedness to romanticism and even classicism is nothing more than to recognize that, as a mode of writing, elements of the realist technique or realist preoccupations originated in a process of historical development. This is not to preclude their existence, critical designation and self-designation in a later movement. For whether the realist mode of writing is disparaged or applauded, there is little argument that such a movement existed. The issue of interest in a later critical context then becomes in what way both critics and practitioners saw realism to exist and what, if any, are the literary historical features which define it for us in a trans-historical perspective.

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[19] Bernard Weinberg, *French Realism: The Critical Reaction, 1830-1870*, (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1937): 117.

[20] David-Sauvageot, in Petit de Julleville, *Histoire de la littérature française*, VII, 170. Cited in Borgerhoff, *op. cit.*, 839.

Within the movement itself, the definition of realism, as formulated by its self-proclaimed practitioners and critical supporters, shows sufficient unanimity to allow us to isolate some of the central features. Central to the realist endeavour is the desire to attain truth--qualified as verifiable and observable--in opposition to the perceived goal of romanticism and classicism of attempting to depict an ideal. It has been observed that "truth" refers not to the world but propositions about the world, that the world itself is accepted as given, a condition for truth. In this sense realism is, as J.P. Stern observes, epistemologically "naive" (31). Accompanying the goal of truth is the representational technique of empirical, scientific and impersonal observation, the source of numerous scientific and ocular metaphors describing the act of literary creation. Greater inclusivity in subject matter, from the beautiful to the ugly, is permitted and even required. The individual subject acquires the role of primary object of representation. While the material world, environmental factors and socio-historic as well as economic forces, is depicted as essential to the complete and accurate depiction of the human subject. E. Auerbach summarizes these developments and innovations in French realist fiction as follows:

> The serious treatment of everyday reality, the rise of more extensive and socially inferior human groups to the position of subject matter for problematic-existential representation, on the one hand; on the other, the embedding of random persons and events in the general course of contemporary

> history, the fluid historical background--these, we believe, are the foundations of modern realism, and it is natural that the broad and elastic form of the novel should increasingly impose itself for a rendering comprising so many elements. If our view is correct, throughout the nineteenth-century France played the most important part in the rise and development of modern realism.[21]

Not surprisingly, realism's numerous critics reacted to precisely these features and innovations in a gesture of negative confirmation. Pilate's question was invoked as truth was denied simple correspondence between reality and experience: "La réalité," according to Arthur Arnould, "n'est vrai pour (le spectateur) que lorsqu'il la rencontre dans sa propre expérience." The absence of the ideal was decried as was the realist penchant for minute observation, the latter being equated with a vulgar preoccupation with non-essential detail. The realist goal of authorial objectivity signalled to many critics a rejection of style. Furthermore, in relation to authorial objectivity, critics argued that realist authors--like all authors--were forced to condense the all-inclusiveness of reality in a process of selection, that the realist penchant for depicting subject matter from the lower orders was merely wilful sordidness. Thus the reaction of unsympathetic critics in many instances mirrors negatively the programmatic goals of realist writers.

In distilling the import of contemporary nineteenth-century statements on realism, Bernard Weinberg isolates five central elements germane to the realist doctrine: a truthful representation of the real world; the study of contemporary life and manners; an artistic approach based on observation; an analytical method in character study; an impersonality of authorial attitude (194). Likewise, René Wellek has isolated several features essential to the description of realism as a period-concept. He includes the notion of realism as "an objective representation of contemporary social reality" as a descriptive designation polemically intended to confront Romanticism; the usage of the character *type*; the goal of objectivity; and the necessity of an historic perspective (10-16). Although Wellek's intentions in so designating realism are at least in part polemic and while his critical terminology is necessarily effected by the synthesizing perspective of his twentieth-century setting, nowhere does his list of structural constituents differ from those derived from nineteenth-century French critical articulations of realism. Thus realism may be seen as a literary doctrine quantifiable in the nineteenth-century--certainly within the example of France--by virtue of its self definition by practitioners and critical adherents, a corresponding critical reaction and a critically visible differentiation, though not opposition, between preceding Romanticism and proceeding Naturalism. In socio-historic terms, it remains to attempt to locate the specific social conditions which provided the environment for realism's development. For obvious reasons such an attempt is fraught with difficulties. Besides being ultimately nothing more than informed conjecture--this in the absence of an *absolute* reason for realism's development--a discussion of realism's social conditions of possibility must be general enough to accommodate the appearance of realism in diverse settings while remaining specific enough to respect the particularities of these same varied contexts.

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[21] Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, trans. W.R. Trask, (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1953): 491.

Wellek, whose critical intent is to locate realism within a specific period as an historically based doctrine of "bad" aesthetics, early in his article distances his study from "the whole fundamental epistemological problem of the relation of art to reality" (2, 18). This distancing has the necessary subsidiary effect of confining his discussion to parameters of literary historicism, to the separation of romanticism from realism in their specifically literary setting, and thus precludes engagement with a broader socio-cultural context. Despite this tendency, Wellek does indicate an historical date of obvious socio-historical importance:

> The time around the July revolution of 1830 was generally considered as the end of an epoch, as the dawn of a new age in literature also. ... In short there was a universal feeling for the end of Romanticism, for the rise of a new age concerned with reality, science and this world. (9-10)

Likewise, Erich Auerbach, in his study of realism's development in the work of Stendhal, Balzac and Flaubert, everywhere observes the presence of contemporary French history in the fiction of this period beginning with Stendhal's *Le Rouge et le noir*, significantly subtitled

"Chronique de 1830" (457-58). Bernard Weinberg documents the fact that many nineteenth-century French critics felt that the vogue for realism derived as much from a general materialist spirit of society, in the wake of the Revolution of 1848, as from literary tradition (129). In support of this observation one might quote Camille de Chancel as typical:

> Au moment où nous sommes du temps et de l'histoire, il n'est point étonnant que la réalité ait en littérature le dessus sur l'idéal. Dans l'ordre économique, les applications ont le pas sur les théories. La société que 1830 et 1848 ont couverte de philosophies, d'utopies, de religions, est en train, aujourd'hui que les grandes eaux fécondantes se sont abaissées, de s'assimiler petit à petit, par un travail silencieux et intime, mais actif et incessant, les débris de doctrines, les fragments de projets, les amas d'ideés accumulés autour d'elles. Pour l'instant, l'attention est plus particulièrement aux améliorations immédiatement réalisables, aux aspirations qui peuvent se traduire en affaires, aux réformes qui peuvent se mettre en actions, aux progrès qui donnent des dividendes. Entre la tendance sociale aux choses pratiques et la tendance littéraire aux héros réels, il y a un certain parallélisme assez exact qui saute aux yeux.[22]

Though the vaguely progressive tone of the above passage seems to validate realism's connectedness with its socio-historical context, the relationship beween literature and society is not as yet required in any programmatic sense as some later materialist literary-critical traditions would have it. Regardless of the absence of an explicitly political prescription in realism advocating the representation of reality in literature in a specifically progressive manner, the connection is there providing realism with the connotation of a liberal, avant-garde movement. Indeed, that realism should change in critical perception from being a progressive literary order to becoming an authoritative, repressive one is evidence in itself that literature is subject to external social forces in its process of evolution.

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[22] Camille de Chancel, "La Courtisane dans le théâtre contemporaine," *Revue de Paris*, XXX 1er mars 1856: 362-78, 371. Cited in Weinberg, *op. cit.*, 129.

Nonetheless, there are obvious difficulties, for a variety of reasons, with looking to historical moments as indicators of causal sources in literary changes of style and movement. Of immediate concernis the fact that such a strategy can account for events within only one socio-historical context while literary movements are vastly more protean in their trans-historical manifestations. A more serious objection, however, would also note that abdication to a single historically causal event in literary change merely begs the question of the source of that historical change. The search for a primal "cause" in any process of development leads to a kind of infinite regression by virtue of the assumptions of deferral imbedded within the very process. And finally, the source of legitimation, of final authority in such an endeavour is always open to question. Opposed to these problems of specificity which attend the search for historical sources for literary change is the admitted generality of literary evolution and development when viewed as the particularly literary *Weltanschauung* of a broader spirit of an age. Yet here again, such terms as *Weltanschauung* and *Zeitgeist* have been justifiably condemned for their hoary indefiniteness, their inability to account for the change, influences and relationships between socio-historic movements and cultural expressions with any degree of verifiable precision.

What seems to be required is a concept capable of identifying the system of relations connecting disparate, though inter-related, cultural expressions which at the same time defines the socio-historic limits of the context. Stated differently, to merge a materialist desire for causality and verifiability in discerning cultural expressions with an idealist system of comprehensiveness and flexibility of conception. One such recent attempt has been Michel Foucault's conception of an "episteme," an historically based field of knowledge and cultural expression or, again, a "*positive unconscious* of knowledge" uniting intellectual and social expression in a variety of disciplines.[23] Although Foucault's concept of the "episteme" and the accompanying activity of studying it as "an archaeology of knowledge" are broadly formulated both in conception and execution, such a model could be of use in the study of nineteenth-century realism. In such an instance, a so conceived model would attempt to locate traces of a "positive unconscious of knowledge" uniting literary expression, criticism, scientific study, philosophical inquiry and other cultural disseminations. As such, literature is viewed as one configuration of knowledge within society which, in a dialectical process, is both influenced by and influential upon other configurations. Apart from indicating the commonplace that works of literature exist within history and culture, emphasis on the complementary process of inter-relations between the various parts and the whole of any epistemic configuration avoids the danger observed by Harry Levin of conceiving of literature simply as a collective expression of society, of equating art to society in a one to one correspondence.[24]

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[23] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), XI.

In a quite different context, F. Jameson indicates the similar dangers of "homogeneity" which attend any attempt at periodization: "One of the concerns frequently aroused by periodizing hypotheses is that they tend to obliterate difference, and to project an idea of the historical period as massive homogeneity (bounded on either side by inexplicable 'chronological' metamorphoses and punctuation marks)."[25] If performing such an "archaeology" mindful of above mentioned dangers is the goal, what then is the method? In the case of a theoretical discussion of realism where a synoptic perspective is being levelled upon not a single text but an entire movement, it would seem appropriate to search for traces of a "positive unconscious," evidence of a dialectical exchange between realism and other configurations of knowledge or cultural expression.

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[24] Harry Levin, *The Gates of Horn: A Study of Five French Realists*, (New York: Oxford UP, 1963), 17.

[25] F. Jameson, "Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," *New Left Review* 46 (1984): 55-56.

The designation of a movement or period concept is fraught with difficulties which must be responded to before the more specific account of the relationship between a single novel and its cultural period may be proffered. This process of attending to such questions of periodization as isolating defining characteristics and providing an historical setting are not, however, merely incidental to this chapter on realism, mimesis and representation. For it is an hypothesis of this study and the form of approach which it implicitly advocates that just as individual novels are necessarily examined in relation to their socio-historical contexts, so cultural periods must be understood in their artistic manifestations.

While realism or modernism, as encompassing cultural designations may be fruitfully posited in abstraction, they may not be used as critical tools without reference to specific cultural and even historical settings. This is simply to observe that while modernism is one thing, modernism in England and Russia, for example, are, although related, two other things. The specific and generalized expressions of any period term are best understood if the shared and contrasting features are studied in unison. This observation applies equally to universalizing descriptive designations and historical dating. To return to the specific examples of Russian and English modernism: both may be defined in similar general terms and within a shared historical framework, although the conditions for their emergence, flourishing and eclipse are decidedly local. In the fourth chapter of this study, the unique case of Russian modernism's legislation out of existence will be discussed to provide a specific, forceful example of the cultural specificity of even transnational movements. Indeed, attendance to local expression of movements is of particular value in the attempt to provide historical parameters for the movement as a whole and in formulating principles for textual inclusion and exclusion. Too often, critical concepts are discussed as supranational phenomena in terms which are historically and textually national.[26] Or, relatedly, historical dates are posited on the basis of generalized, abstracted norms which exclude texts which could be included on the basis of more specific descriptive norms and conditions.[27]

What seems to be required is a method of describing and historically locating literary periods which alternates between universalized supranational concepts and specific socio-historic expressions of that concept, between nineteenth-century realism 1830-1880 and *Hard Times* (1854) or European modernism 1890-1939 and *Ulysses* (1922). In attempting to advance such a method through practice, our strategy will be to submit some generalized comments about cultural period concepts and to propose certain defining paradigmatic features and their relation to the socio-cultural context in broad terms. In moving to specific examples our concern will be in indicating how these generalized features influence, or are manifested in, the central structural conventions of the novel form. For it is in the thematic and formal changes which individual novels bring to the novel form that we may read the expression and creation of realism, socialist realism, modernism and postmodernism and find, once again, examples of the novel's constant representation of changing reality. The procedure to be used in this study is historically based and moves deductively from one socio-historic setting to another according to an understanding of the dialectic relationship existing between reality and literature. Chapter three will deal exclusively with a proposed description of this relationship and indicate how the traits of a socio-cultural period may be traced in individual novels at once to establish the connection between the novel and its period and to affirm literature's continued bond to the world.

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[26] See, for example, Astradur Eysteinsson's criticism of Hugh Kenner's canon and description of "international modernism." *The Concept of Modernism*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990): 88.

[27] See Eysteinsson, *ibid.*, 69, for a criticism of R. Wellek's overly theoretical discussion of symbolism *cum* modernism.

Returning to the specific case of realism, we have already noted some of the formal and conceptual features of realism distilled by such historically based critics as Wellek, Auerbach and Weinberg out of the contemporary comments of nineteenth-century practitioners and critics of realism. Certainly the realist privileging of "the truth" and the belief that propositions of truth could be isolated, observed and depicted partakes of and contributes to what has been identified in another context as a general spirit of "nineteenth-century materialism."[28] The realist approach to artistic creation through observation signals a spirit of scientism which goes a long way in informing the pervasiveness of such ocular metaphors of creativity as the mirror, microscope or camera. Such metaphors are in themselves as interesting for what they presume about the artistic and linguistic process as for how they signal a connection with the tenor of other disciplines of intellectual inquiry. Furthermore, the goal of authorial objectivity presumes the antecedence and independence of external reality from the human subject, while emphasis on character and the study of contemporary life and manners invites the determinist perspective of a kind of latent social Darwinism. Indeed the historical perspective of evolving social, historic and economic forces so germane to realism is equally related to, and expressive of, Marx's left Hegelian *Communist Manifesto* of 1848 as to Darwin's 1859 *The Origin of Species*. And in the same atmosphere Courbet in 1855 entitled his personal exhibitions of rejected paintings "Du Réalisme," just as Duranty entitled his short-lived journal *Réalisme*. When 1830 saw the bourgeois king crowned, Auguste Comte was writing his *Cours de philosophie positive* (1830-42). Popularized in the 1860s, Comte's work would influence and in turn find broader intellectual dissemination in Taine's *Histoire de la littérature anglaise* of 1863-64. Likewise Claude Bernard's 1865 *Introduction à l'étude de la médecine expérimentale* would explicitly inform the method of Zola's *Le Roman expérimental* and signal the evolution of realism into naturalism, empiricism into determinism and liberalism into disastrous totalizing ideologies marking the closing limits of realism's 1830-1880 temporal boundaries. Obviously, the above is an extremely broad description of realism's relation to and participation in broader socio-cultural currents and as such can only tangentially indicate the possibility of such an endeavour. Nonetheless, even in broad strokes, realism's connectedness to the social and cultural environment of the mid-nineteenth century seems apparent.

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[28] See "Materialism, Naturalism and Agnosticism" in J. Passmore, *op. cit.*, 11-32.

The preceding discussion of realism has viewed realism as a particular mode of writing constituent of a larger social and cultural whole. Finding completion in identification with that whole and articulated as an ascendant mode of writing within that "episteme," realism defined itself consciously as a movement which can be dated historically at least in approximate terms according to national setting. So perceived, realism seems best defined as the form of artistic expression related to an historical period, as an historical period concept. This sufficiently places realism in historical and conceptual terms as a movement; it does not, however, account for the origins of the typological nature of the realist mode of writing from which the movement solidified and which finds expression in later forms of writing. It is this amorphous, protean mode of writing which originates in the connection of literature to reality (in a specific socio-historically based manner within the movement of realism) and which Wellek strategically sidestepped in his refusal to discuss "this eternal realism, the whole fundamental epistemological problem of the relation of art to reality." And it is precisely this point which proponents of realism as a perennial mode of literature consistently refer to in response to critical positions which attempt to deny realism referential validity or confine it to a fixed historical period. E.B. Greenwood states the issue succinctly in responding to Wellek's above noted avoidance of this "epistemological problem:"

> Professor Wellek rightly drew attention to the perennial nature of the problem of "realism" in art. This perennial quality sufficiently contradicts the attempt one sometimes meets to dismiss realism scornfully as associated with the rise of a *bourgeoisie* which did not know how to differentiate between art and the *trompe l'oeil*. ... Now I contend that it is impossible in the end to sever the period realism from the perennial realism and to ignore the fundamental epistemological problem of the relation of art to reality because if the so-called period realism is

> severed in this manner it is no longer seen as in itself it really is, as a functioning thing, but as a dead specimen to be dissected in a kind of literary laboratory.[29]

It is by now quite obvious that this study conceives of realism as a mode of writing which defined itself into a movement of articulated conceptual specificity according to the socio-cultural conditions of its historical setting and on the basis of literature's potentially perennial, mimetic relationship to reality. The specificity of the realist programme from approximately 1830 until 1880 cannot easily be denied, either in terms of its utilization and refinement of realist techniques or in terms of its differentiation from past and subsequent renderings of reality within literature. What now seems required is a concept responsive to Wellek's "epistemological problem," the perennial connectedness of art to life, the source of realism's particularly nineteenth-century rendering of this relationship. Traditionally, as for instance in E. Auerbach's *Mimesis*, the concept of mimesis has been called forth to account for this epistemological issue. For as conceived in Auerbach's study, the concept of mimesis retained a combination of specificity and flexibility which made it amenable to a precise examination of realist moments in the literatures of changing historical periods. Recently, however, mimesis has been seriously challenged on a number of fronts so that it cannot simply be used unproblematically.

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[29] E.B. Greenwood, "Reflections on Professor Wellek's Concept of Realism," *Neophilologus* 46 (1962): 6.

Mimesis as traditionally conceived can not account for the representational stance of either, for instance, the socialist realism of *Mother*, which codified and falsified the imitation of reality, or *Gravity's Rainbow* which has stretched the very limits of our understanding of reality. The following, then, will provide a typological discussion of three accounts of mimesis with a view to establishing (salvaging?!) a particular understanding of mimesis which, when combined with the above examination of realism and the discussion below of the novel form and the function of language, will provide the basis for the aesthetic concept of representation to be then demonstrated in three exemplary novels.

2. Mimesis and the Source of Representation:

Mimesis is undoubtedly one of the, central critical concept of western literature. Throughout the development of western literature, the relationship between reality and fiction has been of defining importance both in the creation and understanding of literature. Although mimesis as an aesthetic presupposition has dominated literary production and reception since approximately the fifth-century B.C.E., it has not always remained at the forefront of critical discussion. As a critical concept mimesis sank into relative obscurity in the eighteenth-century with romanticism's privileging of such new aesthetic ideals as personal genius and spontaneous self-expression only to be returned to the critical forefront (now polemicized) in the twentieth-century.[30] Doubtless, it would be intriguing to pursue reasons for the eclipse of mimesis as a critical term during the moment of its greatest practical expression in the nineteenth-century realist novel. (Perhaps in the realist novel Hegel's grey owl took flight.) Such causal specifics are not our present concern, however. We do note, though, that in the twentieth-century, mimesis returned to critical discussion in such instances of positive assessment as the "Chicago School" of Anglo-American criticism. While in more recent years, particularly among such French theorists of literature as Foucault, Barthes and Derrida, mimesis has re-emerged as a topic of interest. Now, however, mimesis is discussed as a problematized concept--*l'enjeu de la mimesis*--the subject of a sustained critical attack and a corresponding defence.[31] Without descending into the particulars of the debate (or ascending to the heights of the accompanying critical discourse), it may be observed that this debate has had the salutary effect of clarifying the status of critical positions and principles related to mimesis, of making explicit the various prior assumptions which underpin *any* particular view of mimesis. Such an effect is not merely of passing value, for any understanding of mimesis involves the intersection of an array of aesthetic, ideological, cultural and epistemological issues, all of which are expressed according to changing historical conditions. For although mimesis would seem a term of critical opacity standing on firm conceptual basis as a universally applicable concept regulating fiction's relation to reality, the variability of its expression according to differing socio-historical conditions would suggest otherwise. Far from being a monolithic concept with an immutable core doctrine, the historical study of mimesis reveals a concept itself determined by changing temporal and cultural contexts. Reviewing the historical developments and vicissitudes within the concept of mimesis is (mercifully) outside the requirements of this study. Nevertheless, we may with profit note Wladyslaw Tatarkiewicz's delineation of six fundamental changes in the conception of mimesis, from the fifth-century B.C.E. until the eighteenth-century C.E.:

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[30] For a brief discussion of the critical fortunes of mimesis see M. Spariosu's introduction in *Mimesis in Contemporary Theory: An Interdisciplinary Approach* ed., Mihai Spariosu, (Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1984): i-xxiv. While for more substantial coverage of the same topic see J.D. Boyd, *The Function of Mimesis and Its Decline*, (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1968).

[31] See, for instance, the introduction to *Mimesis: Des Articulations*, ed. S. Agacinski, (Paris: Flammarion, 1975): 5-14.

> Classical antiquity not only initiated the view that the arts (specifically, the mimetic arts) are the imitation of reality, but also gave it at once two interpretations: Plato's uncompromising interpretation, and Aristotle's liberal one. Hellenism preserved this theory, while defending, however, also other functions of art: initially the expressive function, later the ideological. The Middle Ages likewise preserved it, chiefly thanks to the Aristotelianism of Thomas Aquinas.
>
> Second to classical antiquity, the Renaissance was an era of flowering for the mimetic theory: antiquity had created it--the Renaissance gave it precise formulation, elaboration, differentiation. The theory was never more widespread than in the 17th century; however, in a peculiar idealising

> version: art imitates reality, but only those aspects of reality that are general and perfect. But the most radical form of the theory of mimesis arose only in the 18th century: imitation was presented as a universal property of all the arts, not merely of the "mimetic" ones. Still, the same Enlightenment aesthetician who thus broadened the theory, at the same time narrowed it by asserting that the arts imitate not all of reality but only the beautiful reality.The later 18th century took little interest in the mimetic function of art. What could be said on the subject, had already been said earlier.[32]

Of primary interest here is the fact that antiquity initiated the concept of art's imitation of reality in two seminal interpretations--those of Plato and Aristotle--which, although modified and expanded, were never entirely abandoned until the late eighteenth-century. Furthermore, this reading of the history of the development of mimesis coincides with the description of mimesis provided by Christopher Prendergast in *The Order of Mimesis*. In Prendergast's discussion, however, the critical assault upon and rejection of mimesis in the aesthetic formulations of such critics as R. Barthes and J. Derrida is added to a broad understanding of the Aristotelean and Platonic traditions of mimesis. In effecting a concise examination of three complex positions, Prendergast employs a metaphor of health to refer to the effects of a mimetic aesthetic on the bodies of literature and literary criticism. Accordingly, Aristotle's conception of mimesis prescribes for its proponents health to both society and literature; Plato's diagnoses the mimetic order as poisonous to the social fabric; while the structuralist and post-structuralist critics suffer nausea and the ill physical effects of aesthetic-cum-ideological repression.[33] Without returning specifically to Prendergast's account of these three broadly conceived positions, it will prove useful to utilize his tri-partite encapsulation as a means of gaining an overview of the concept of mimesis from which to establish a flexible conception of representation. For it is out of an understanding of these broadly conceived claims for, and criticisms of mimesis that this study will arrive at a perception of the concept capable of providing the basis for an understanding of representation in the twentieth-century novel.

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[32] Wladyslaw Tatarkiewicz, *A History of Six Ideas: An Essay in Aesthetics*, (Warszawa: Polish Scientific Publishers, 1980): 275.

As is generally conceded, Plato's attack on mimesis is based, not on the idea of mimesis as a faulty or ill-conceived and thus false concept, but as a concept which functions to the detriment of the state. Mimesis, for Plato, is wrong not in conception but in function and effect. The core of this critique is contained in Books 3 and 10 of *The Republic*. In Book 3, Plato is concerned primarily with matters political and pedagogical. In particular, his interest is exercised by the thought of educating an élite corps of Guards and in controlling the desultory effect of their contact with the imitation of unworthy people or acts. Gerald Else has succinctly described the purport of this section of Plato's argument against mimesis:

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[33] See C. Prendergast, "The order of mimesis: poison, nausea, health," in *The Order of Mimesis*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986): 1-23.

> He (Plato) is not merely trying to limit mimesis to worthy objects, he is trying to limit it altogether, because it means variousness and multiplicity and variousness and multiplicity are bad. He is out to breed and train a uniform, simple kind of men and is excluding anything that might defeat that purpose.[34]

In Book 10, Plato returns to his attack on mimesis and poetry, no longer, however, as a concept isolated in relation to pedagogy and politics but as a concept in relationship to his ontological philosophy of Ideas or Forms. He demonstrates poetry's third stage removal from the truth; poetry is nothing more than an imitation of a corporeal imitation which is itself an imperfect approximation of an eternal Form. Poetry in this sense is false. Apart from the epistemological difficulties associated with mimesis, as J. D. Boyd indicates, Plato feared poetry because of its proximity to the emotions and its propensity to unrighteousness with respect to the depiction of the Gods (10-11). Poetry, therefore, must be avoided because as a mimetic art it was false in conception and dangerous in effect, actively leading men from sobre, righteous behaviour. As mimetic and dangerously affective, Plato banned poetry and the poet from the city as follows:

> Now since we are back on the subject of poetry, let us defend ourselves by showing that we were quite right in banishing it from the city for being what it is, for reason compelled it. Let us say to poetry, that she may not impute to us harshness and rudeness, that there is an

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[34] G.F. Else, *Plato and Aristotle on Poetry*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986): 32.

> ancient quarrel between philosophy and poetry, shown by such sayings as that philosophy is a yelping cur howling at its master, and is strong in the silly talk of fools, and that the crowd of pretended wise men is too much for Zeus, and that the philosophers are carefully thinking out how poor they are; these and many other things are signs of the ancient enmity of poetry and philosophy.[35]

Rescinding the poet's *droit de cité*, then, is not simply a matter of mimetic poetry's imperfect status as an aesthetic concept founded on immorality and the lie, but of curtailing its affective power in the face of philosophy, of asserting a civic order and authority potentially endangered by mimesis. Prendergast states the issue thus: "In brief, mimesis is excommunicated not because it is a threat to truth, but because it is a threat to order" (10). While Spariosu reiterates: "At stake here is not morality, but something that in fact determines it: authority or power" (v).

The issue of order or authority denied the mimetic power of art has recently been returned to discussions of mimesis. In contemporary examinations of the question, however, mimesis is castigated for *necessarily* imposing a repressive order, a *doxa*, upon the freedoms of both reality and art. In terms of reality, the mimetic impulse in art is viewed as ideologically motivated, resulting in the forced artistic capitulation to a repressive, prearticulated and authorized vision of the "natural" order of things. Thus R. Barthes in *S/Z* makes the following observation of bourgeois culture's manipulation of the literary codes of a mimetic art:

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[35] From "Book 10" of *The Republic* in *Literary Criticism: Plato to Dryden*, ed., A.H. Gilbert, (Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1962): 54.

> Although entirely derived from books, these codes, by a swivel characteristic of bourgeois ideology, which turns culture into nature, appear to establish reality, "Life." "Life" then, in the classic text, becomes a nauseating mixture of common opinions, a smothering layer of received ideas: in fact, it is in these cultural codes that what is outmoded in Balzac, the essence of what, in Balzac, cannot be (re)written, is concentrated. What is outmoded, of course, is not a defect in performance, a personal inability of the author to afford opportunities in his work for what will be modern, but rather a fatal condition of Replete Literature, mortally stalked by the army of stereotypes it contains.[36]

When transposed to literature, the ideologically motivated referential codes which accompany mimetic art foster repetition and the visceral aesthetic response of boredom and nausea: "The referential codes have a kind of emetic virtue, they bring on nausea by the boredom, conformism, and disgust with repetition that establishes them" (139). Thus, within this critical response to mimetic art, mimesis serves as a repressive ideological and aesthetic order, reinforcing a prejudged view of the world and a prescription for its depiction. Like the Platonic banishment of mimetic art, this treatment of mimesis mistrusts the authority presumed in mimetic art.

Related to this position at its more radical and occasionally polemic limits, is the view which conceives of mimesis primarily and most damagingly as, fundamentally, the consequence of faulty epistemological and linguistic understanding and hence flawed aesthetics. In this instance, mimesis is not merely in eternal conflict with philosophy as in the formulation of Plato, rather philosophy demonstrates mimesis out of existence as an untenable position.[37] Here the issue of mimesis is bound up in the familiar epistemological duality of subject and object particularly as it is expressed in the linguistic terms of signifier and signified. The referential task of mimetic art of depicting the world through the medium of language is posed as a false problem, an epistemological and linguistic impossibility, as language--and thus literature--refers to and represents not the world but itself. The formerly accepted referential qualities of language which underpin the mimetic process are removed, stripping language and literature of any representational capability. The critical, linguistic source of this dismantling of any relation between signifier and signified is located in Ferdinand de Saussure's influential *Course in General Linguistics*. In place of the former conception of a referential relation between signifier and signified, word and thing, in the formation of *langue*, Saussure argued that language functioned as a self-contained system wherein words were distinguished differentially in relation not to objects but to other words in the system:

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[36] Roland Barthes, *S/Z*, trans. R. Miller, (New York: The Noonday Press, 1974): 206.

Everything that has been said up to this point boils down

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[37] See, for instance, the comment: "Le concept de mimésis n'est pas seulement insuffisant, mais radicalement faux." in G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *Mille Plateaux*, (Paris: 1980): 374.

> to this: in language there are only differences. Even more important: a difference generally implies positive terms between which the difference is set up; but in language there are only differences *without positive terms*. Whether we take the signified or the signifier, language has neither ideas nor sounds that existed before the linguistic system, but only conceptual and phonic differences that have issued from the system. The idea or phonic substance that a sign contains is of less importance than the other signs that surround it. Proof of this is that the value of a term may be modified without either its meaning or its sound being affected, solely because a neighbouring term has been modified.[38]

The critical heritage of Saussure's work in linguistics has been extensive and has found particular application in strains of structuralist and post-structuralist critics who have ignored the social and institutional expression of language in social communities to emphasize the subjectivity of language as a system. Accordingly these positions have extended critical discussion of the loss of reference from linguistics into literature with obvious attendant implications for a theory of mimesis. Now is not the occasion for a full discussion and criticism of this position on mimesis which rejects it on epistemological and linguistic grounds; such criticism will be explicit in a later discussion of language as referential medium within social context.[39] Here it is sufficient to observe the basis of the only position which rejects mimesis outright. It is this position as well which conflates realism and mimesis to dispose of both on the basis of a changed understanding of language. J. Hillis Miller provides a useful example of this general approach:

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[38] Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. W. Baskin, (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959): 120.

[39] A criticism which could as well begin with certain of Saussure's statements ignored in the attempt to demonstrate the arbitrariness of language. For instance: "In fact every means of expression used in society is based, in principle, on collective behaviour or--what amounts to the same thing--on convention." or "A particular language state is always the product of historical forces, and these forces explain why the sign is unchangeable, i.e. why it resists any arbitrary substitution." Saussure, *ibid.*, 68 and 72.

> One important aspect of current literary criticism is the disintegration of the paradigms of realism under the impact of structural linguistics and the renewal of rhetoric. If meaning in language rises not from the reference of signs to something outside words but from differential relations among the words themselves, if "referent" and "meaning" must always be distinguished, then the notion of a literary text which is validated by its one-to-one correspondence to some social, historical, or psychological reality can no longer be taken for granted. No language is purely mimetic or referential, not even the most utilitarian speech. The specifically literary form of language, however, may be defined as a structure of words which in one way or another calls attention to this fact, while at the same time allowing for its own inevitable misreading as a "mirroring of reality."[40]

The final, broadly conceived (indeed, the broadest) position on mimesis is founded on Aristotle and the extensive critical tradition engendered by Aristotle's *Poetics*. Aristotle, like Plato, saw mimesis as the basis of art; unlike Plato however, Aristotle conceived of mimesis as the "natural" result of man's urge to, and pleasure in, imitating reality in art as the ultimate consequence of man's fundamental desire "to know." Aristotle avoided the epistemological (and moral) issues raised by Plato by refusing his teacher's understanding of mimesis as a false copying of eternal Forms, instead to emphasize an understanding of mimesis as creation. Thus, as Gerald Else writes, the Aristotelian meaning of mimesis is shifted to emphasize the creation of things rather than the copying of them:

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[40] J. Hillis Miller, "The Fiction of Realism: *Sketches by Boz, Oliver Twist*, and Cruikshank's Illustrations," reprinted in part in *Realism*, ed. Lilian R. Furst, (Harlow: Longman Publishing, 1992): 287.

> A poet, then, is an *imitator* in so far as he is a *maker*, viz. of plots. The paradox is obvious. Aristotle has developed and changed the bearing of a concept which originally meant a faithful *copying* of pre-existent things, to make it mean a *creation* of things which have never existed or whose existence, if they did exist, is accidental to the poetic process. Copying is after the fact; Aristotle's mimesis creates the fact. It is clear that his use of the word in such a way can only be accounted for historically: that is, that such a redefinition of a simple concept can only be understood as the end-product of a long, gradual development. Without Plato especially, and a considerable development of the idea in him, Aristotle's use of mimesis would be inconceivable.[41]

However conceived (and indeed, however naively adapted in later critical use) Aristotle's unmistakeable establishment of mimesis as the fundamental concept of his poetic theory is the basis of the almost unchallenged perception of the concept of mimesis in the western literary tradition until the late eighteenth-century. This is the view of mimesis which sees it as the creative source of all art and which will serve as a foundation for our view of representation in the twentieth-century novel.

Contained within the above three conceptions of mimesis, then, is a continuum of views of mimesis: mimesis is polarized as both the source of art and its ultimate falsification. The attempt to formulate a model of representation which maintains the referential function of literature with the world clearly must negotiate some form of theoretical compromise with one of the above views--the Platonic--and a critical rejection of the other--the linguistic-epistemologically based. And although much seems intractable in the above continuum of positions concerning mimesis, difficulties recede when a degree of relativity is introduced into the critical understanding of the normative tendencies of mimesis. When the causal and potentially doctrinaire prescriptive emphasis of mimesis is lifted and replaced with a more descriptive, temporally and culturally variable notion of representation, mimesis becomes a more manageable concept. For in all but the most challenging of philosophical positions, it is not the possibility of a mimetic function which is denied but rather the ideological and aesthetic legitimacy of such a function which is questioned. In this latter context mimesis becomes an issue of taste and opinion even the extremes of which a liberalized, *creative* conception of mimesis can and must accommodate. As for the philosophically based rejection of mimesis, it will be the task of the next chapter to demonstrate in greater detail the practical and theoretical inadequacy of such a critical position especially with regard to the novel. In the wake of the present overview of realism and mimesis, then, representation may be defined, in part, according to its contribution to one and its derivation from the other.

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[41] See Gerald Else, *Aristotle's Poetics: The Argument*, (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1957): 322.

Representation derives from the imitative, creative interpretation of mimesis to emphasize not a copying of external reality but a depiction of it according to reigning socio-historic norms. Representation contributes to realism by bringing this perennial function to the literature of the mid-nineteenth century where it could give artistic form to the era's understanding of reality. Thus, representation will be understood more flexibly than either the period expression of this function in realism or its blanket application as the concept of mimesis. Particularly, the universalizing connotations of the term mimesis will be refined by the inclusion of a generic category. Representation will be discussed in conjunction with the genre of the novel; for it is genre which effects the specific aesthetic expression of literature's mimetic function. This next chapter, then, will examine the *familial* features of the novelistic construct to base discussion on the generic requirements of the novel form and the communicative requirements of the socially based medium of language. This chapter will establish the conditions for demonstrating an inclusive, non-prescriptive concept of representation as the creative and adaptive imitation of reality in the twentieth-century novel according to changing social, historic and ideological conditions.

Chapter 2

Representation and the Genre of the Novel

It remains a persistent and almost universally acknowledged fact of literary scholarship that, regardless of either the totalizing simplicity or particularizing complexity of any attempt to isolate and codify the unique generic features of the novel, the novel as it is practised resists such definition. As a genre, the novel seems congenitally hostile to the closure of structural definitions. Indeed, in some approaches, precisely this feature of generic fluidity is identified as the characteristic element of the genre, its "novelness." The critical difficulties of defining the novel are not simplified in the move from a discussion of the novel as an abstract category to an examination of the historical and social sources of the genre. This, though the problem of ascertaining what the novel is, of isolating its defining features is closely related to the problem of locating the novel's historic origins. Variously, the novel is said to "rise" on a deserted island, to emerge out of the epistemological and generic dialectic of the early modern period, to write itself into existence during the course of Don Quixote's lonely quest, to reappear periodically as an essential though varyingly quantifiable feature in many of history's extended narratives or finally to offer itself as a surrogate epic whole in an age deprived of the epic's extensive totality.[1] Fortunately, our present study is not required to wrestle with this difficult issue of the novel's literary and social origins.[2] Relieved of this responsibility for reasons of the scope and requirements of our study of representation in the twentieth-century novel, it will prove useful, nonetheless, to review two of the central approaches to both the question of the origin of the novel and to the generic properties of it. In so engaging in this reviewing exercise, our concern will be to isolate potential features of the novel which ensure the novel's necessary connection with reality and to indicate possible means by which the novel responds to differing socio-cultural and philosophic settings. This final motivation is, of course, related to the understanding of representation we wish to establish. For the novel's generic fluidity in meeting the requirements of changing socio-cultural contexts will be shown to be a primary indicator of the novel's animating spirit of representation.

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[1] For extended discussion of these approaches see, among others, I. Watt *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding*, (Harmondsworth: Peregrine, [1957] 1985), M. McKeon *The Origins of the English Novel--1600-1740*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1987), W. L. Reed *An Exemplary History of the Novel: The Quixotic versus the Picaresque*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), M. Bakhtin *The Dialogic Imagination*, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), G. Lukács *The Theory of the Novel*, trans. Anna Bostock, (London: Merlin Press, [1920] 1971) and Daniel R. Schwartz, *The Humanistic Heritage: Critical Theories of the English Novel from James to Hillis Miller*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986).

[2] I sidestep the issue of the novel's "beginnings" despite an awareness of the important issues at stake. For a discussion of some of these issues see L. J. Davis "Introduction: Toward a Methodology of Beginnings" in *Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel*, (New York: Columbia UP, 1983).

1. Reviewing the Novel

In one sense, the reviewing and selecting of those generic features of the novel which will prove amenable to the larger discussion of representation involves a kind of *a posteriori* argumentation. For we will not be discussing the novel form disinterestedly, but as a means of providing the basis for an examination of representation in its various manifestations. In another sense, however, our understanding of representation as an aesthetic feature of the novel acutely responsive to changes in socio-historic settings accommodates such a method, particularly in the context of this study. Firstly, representation will be discussed in terms of three texts of the twentieth-century which would in most instances be identified as novels, regardless of the specifics of the generic definition of the novel used though challenges to their identification as novels will be met. Furthermore, and more importantly, the concept of representation to be discussed and the primary importance to be accorded it as the point of contact between the spheres of literature and society, between fiction and reality assumes such an approach. For we will be indicating how representation in the novel is not an issue solely of the literary system but of the cultural system as well, the socio-historic setting in which the novel is based. Indeed, we shall see how the novel takes structural form to a large degree from its necessary contact with an evolving world of shared reality. Given the interconnectedness of these two broadly conceived systems in our understanding of the novel and representation, it would seem unduly limiting to refer solely to principles of the aesthetic system in defining the novel.

There are still further methodological reasons for following this course. Engagement with the topic of the novel's generic features solely in terms of the aesthetic system, and the attempt to isolate the properties both necessary and sufficient to such a definition, is a gesture of essentialist thinking which seems destined to either the extreme of rigid limitation or that of over-inclusiveness. In warning against the dangers of such an approach, N. W. Visser has adapted the dynamic system of classification first put forward by Wittgenstein in his theory of family resemblances to demonstrate a method of isolating and discussing the central features of the novel:[3]

> 66 Consider for example the proceedings that we call "games." I mean board-games, card-games, ball-games, Olympic games, and so on. What is common to them all?-- Don't say: "There *must* be something common, or they would not be called 'games'"--but *look* and *see* whether there is anything common to all.--For if you look at them you will not see something that is common to *all*, but similarities, relationships, and a whole series of them at that. To repeat: don't think but look!--Look for example at board-games, with their multifarious relationships. Now pass to card-games; here you find many correspondences with the first group, but many common features drop out, and others appear. When we pass next to ball-games, much that is common is retained, but much is lost.--Are they all

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[3] N. W. Visser, "The Generic Identity of the Novel," *Novel* 11.2 (Winter 1978): 101-14.

> 'amusing?' Compare chess with noughts and crosses. Or is there always winning and losing, or competition between players? Think of patience. In ball games there is winning and losing; but when a child throws his ball at the wall and catches it again, this feature has disappeared. Look at the parts played by skill and luck; and at the games like ring-a-ring-a-roses; here is the element of amusement, but how many other characteristic features have disappeared! And we can go through the many, many other groups of games in the same way; can see how similarities crop up and disappear.
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> And the result of this examination is: we see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and cris-crossing: sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail. 67 I can think of no better expression to characterize these similarities than "family resemblances;" for the various resemblances between members of a family: build, features, colour of eyes, gait, temperament, etc. etc. overlap and cris-cross in the same way.--And I shall say: "games" form a family.[4]

Equipped with Wittgenstein's theory of family resemblances, it is possible to concentrate attention on features and properties typical to the generic concept (family) of novelness. Apart from freeing us from the thankless task of fixing the novel's generic limits and its socio-historic origins, such an approach provides the scope for the kind of lateral movement necessary to pursue such a question as, for instance, to what extent Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow* differs from the typically novelistic and not whether it is or is not a novel. This is especially so as both supporters and detractors of the representational function of the novel frequently identify *the* novel as the *realist* novel of Balzac and Tolstoy rather than an evolving form. Thus, it will be possible to remain in the realm of the descriptive and avoid implicitly prescriptive definitions.

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[4] The passage cited in Visser, *ibid.*, 102 is taken from Ludwig Wittgenstein *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953): 31e-32e. For another expression of the same central idea see L. Wittgenstein *The Blue and the Brown Books* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1964): 17.

This approach also provides the freedom to review and utilize some of the disparate though nonetheless complimentary descriptions of the novel which have preceded this study. Two such studies of importance here are Ian Watt's seminal *The Rise of the Novel* and Mikhail Bakhtin's essays on facets of the novel from *The Dialogic Imagination*. In another context Walter Reed has discussed Ian Watt's *The Rise of the Novel* and Georg Lukács' *The Theory of the Novel* as examples of the two dominant strains in the study of the novel form: respectively the *national* and the *world-historical* (19-20). And while not violated by the augmentation of Bakhtin with Lukács, this opposition provides an excellent basis for the recognition of specific recurrent features within the novel. Thus the following will be an attempt intended not so much to reconcile these two broadly conceived approaches as to identify certain similarities which indicate specific relationships, "resemblances" within the novel family.

Given the previous chapter's excursion into the distinctions between realism and mimesis, it would seem appropriate to begin with the connection between realism and the novel form. Ian Watt makes this connection with his seminal notion of "formal realism." Formal realism refers to the set of narrative procedures by which the novel exhibits its essentially "circumstantial view of life," its specific means of representing reality:

> The narrative method whereby the novel embodies this circumstantial view of life may be called its formal realism; formal, because the term realism does not here refer to any special literary doctrine or purpose, but only to a set of narrative procedures which are so commonly found together in the novel, and so rarely in other literary genres, that they may be regarded as typical of the form itself. Formal realism, in fact, is the narrative embodiment of a premise that Defoe and Richardson accepted very literally, but which is implicit in the novel form in general: the premise, or a primary convention, that the novel is a full and authentic report of human experience, and is therefore under an obligation to satisfy its reader with such details of the story as the individuality of the actors concerned, the particulars of the times and places of their actions, details which are presented through a more largely referential use of language than is common in other literary forms.
>
> Formal realism is, of course, like the rules of evidence, only a convention; and there is no reason why the report on human life through it should be in fact any truer than those presented through the very different conventions of other literary genres. (34-35)

Although Watt has imbedded in the above quote the conditions of a definition of the novel which assure and even necessitate its relatedness to realism, the particulars of this definition or the conditions of its acceptance need not detain us. What may be derived from this passage, however, is his contention concerning the novel's formal structure and its attendant purpose. Here, the genre of the novel is viewed as a specific set of narrative procedures and conventions purposefully so combined to affect a particular imitation of reality.

Specifically, this uniquely novelistic combination of procedures and conventions "allows a more immediate imitation of individual experience set in its temporal and spatial environment than do other literary forms" (35-36). Of primary importance to the understanding of the novel as a genre, then, is the narrative configuration which affords the highest degree of literary representation of human experience in its spatial and temporal context.

This still broadly formulated conception of the novel's generic conception would seem to correspond with Bakhtin's fundamental notion of the chronotope. In his "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel," Bakhtin defines the chronotope as "the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature" (84). Furthermore, for Bakhtin the chronotope is at the very basis of generic differences in literature:

> The chronotope in literature has an intrinsic *generic* significance. It can even be said that it is precisely the chronotope that defines genre and generic distinctions, for in literature the primary category in the chronotope is time. The chronotope as a formally constitutive category determines to a significant degree the image of man in literature as well. The image of man is always intrinsically chronotopic. (84-85)

Novelness may be found, then, precisely in the assimilation of an actual historical chronotope, reality, into its literary chronotope, the novel. As Bakhtin is offering an historical poetics, his method is to illustrate this recurring process in a series of chronotopic expressions of reality from the Greek romance until the Rabelaisian novel. Given that Watt and Bakhtin represent two opposing poetics of the novel, it is not surprising that they should differ profoundly on the historic nature of the novel's development of a specific relation to time and space--a point of fundamental importance to each of their poetics of the novel. Whereas Watt recognizes evidence of earlier manifestations of a "novel-like" rendering of time and space according to the conventions of formal realism, he sees them as exceptions which would not acquire any authoritative generic dominance until the social conditions of the eighteenth-century permitted and necessitated them (36). Bakhtin, conversely, eschews this historically evaluative assessment, preferring instead to find the novel anywhere that the chronotopic dimensions of reality are represented in the form of an artistic chronotope. Ours is not the task to mediate between these two understandings of the depiction of time and space in the novel except to note what unites them for our own use. In both instances the novel is seen to effect a specific generic manipulation of formal conventions to represent an understanding of the temporal and spatial unity of reality, however conceived. Furthermore, the range of understanding of reality possible for artistic depiction, for transference into the literary chronotope and the composition of the specific formal features and conventions of exposition is organically related to the social and cultural conditions of its period or context. At this point, then, we may think of the novel as a genre signified by its formal manipulations for the depiction of a spatial and temporal unity based on reality and conditioned by the cultural and epistemological possibilities in the period of novelistic representation.

2. Representation and the Familial Traits of the Novel:

With this as yet indistinct resemblance noted, it will be possible to scrutinize the progressively more focused traits of time, space, plot character and language ultimately to arrive at a composite description of the novel as a genre defined not solely by its formal features and structure but by its representational relationship to its social context, reality.

One of the most keenly felt contributions of Georg Lukács' *The Theory of the Novel* to an understanding of the novel is his discussion of time.[5] Lukács sees the novel in terms of a fundamental understanding of totality in which everything human is contained within a transcendent whole. The art form which exemplified the possibilities and conditions of this wholeness where "(b)eing and destiny, adventure and accomplishment, life and essence are ... identical concepts" (30) was the epic. Deprived of the metaphysical conditions which sustained this homogeneity, the epic could no longer function as the genre of extensive totality. In such conditions of metaphysical heterogeneity and fragmentation, the novel functions as the genre capable of providing a surrogate artistic totality of being, replacing the one now absent from the conditions of life:

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[5] For a further appraisal of this topic see Graham Good "Lukács' *Theory of the Novel*," in *Towards a Poetics of Fiction*, ed. Mark Spilka (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1977): 125-35.

> The epic and the novel, these two major forms of great epic literature, differ from one another not by their authors' fundamental intentions but by the given historico-philosophical realities with which the authors were confronted. The novel is the epic of an age in which the extensive totality of life is no longer directly given, in which the immanence of meaning in life has become a problem, yet which still thinks in terms of totality. (56)

Constituent of this epic totality was the absence of time as process: "In the epic the life-immanence of meaning is so strong that it abolishes time" (122). In the novel, conversely, the genre of substitute totality, the inexorable process of temporal progression becomes a feature of primary importance: "In the novel, meaning is separated from life, and hence the essential from the temporal; we might almost say that the entire inner action of the novel is nothing but a struggle against the power of time" (122). The novel is thus seen to differ from the epic in its unique orientation to the depiction of time as a temporal process and not a fixed category.

Drawing upon this fundamental distinction in modes of temporal depiction, Bakhtin elaborates upon the specificity of the novel's relation to time. Whereas the epic preserves time in an heroic past of ideal values and a sacrosanct tradition, the novel takes as its point of temporal departure the fluidity and inconclusiveness of the historical present, the sphere of perpetual development. From this placement in the ever inconclusive present, the novel gains its necessary engagement with history. The fluidity of the present and the concomitant process of becoming presumes a larger, causal progression of time of which the present is but a particularized moment.

Whereas Bakhtin emphasizes potential novelness in any historical moment of narrative contact with the temporal present, Watt stresses the particularly modern understanding of time in the late seventeenth, early eighteenth-century.[6] Here too time is understood as a series of moments in a connected temporal process of extended duration. In the instance of the English eighteenth-century, however, as opposed to the isolated historical examples discussed by Bakhtin, Watt demonstrates the increased self-consciousness of this cultural and philosophical setting concerning time. According to both views, the specificity of the present within an historical process is seen to emphasize the causal development of the represented action and characters out of the past and into the future. As in reality, time is accorded status as a factor in human experience. This relationship to time and developmental progression may also explain the modern novel's inclusion of other such narrative types of extended, developmental time span as the biography, the autobiography and history and of themes and motifs of assumed duration: the journey, social change and education.[7]

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[6] Watt, *op. cit.*, 25-26.

The usually accompanying category of time is space and not surprisingly the novel's use of space shares characteristics with its relation to time. Just as the novel places events and experience within a particularized moment in the temporal progression of history, the present, so the novel particularizes space. As the novel is concerned with the present as the moment of becoming and possibility, it is also attracted to the inconclusiveness of contemporary reality. Stressing the representational innovations assumed by the novel's unique relation to time as the present and the relatedness of time and space in the novel, Bakhtin discusses the particularizing quality of the novel's interest in any historical time and place precisely for its inconclusiveness:

> For the first time in artistic-ideological consciousness, time and the world become historical: they unfold, albeit at first still unclearly and confusedly, as becoming, as an uninterrupted movement into a real future, as a unified, all-embracing and unconcluded process. Every event, every phenomenon, every thing, every object of artistic representation loses its completedness, its hopelessly finished quality and its immutability that had been so essential to it in the world of the epic 'absolute past,' walled off by an unapproachable boundary from the

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[7] See Visser, *op. cit.*, 105. Reference to narrative types of temporal duration and themes and motifs of social change and education leads us naturally to a discussion of a topic which, due to its specificity, unfortunately leaves it outside the scope of our more generalized discussion: that of the *Bildungsroman*. We note in passing, however, Maurice Z. Shroder's comments in "The Novel as Genre," in Philip Stevick ed., *The Theory of the Novel*, 13-28: "In other words, the *Bildungsroman* is not merely a special category: the theme of the novel is essentially that of formation, of education" (16).

> continuing and unfinished present. Through contact with the present, an object is attracted to the incomplete process of a world-in-the-making, and is stamped with the seal of inconclusiveness. ... This creates the radically new zone for structuring images in the novel, a zone of maximally close contact between the represented object and contemporary reality in all its inconclusiveness--and consequently a similarly close contact between the object and the future. (30-31)

The novel, then, is drawn to the particularized setting of the present as the locale of greatest possibility for development. Once again, Watt's discussion of the category of space in the novel concurs with Bakhtin's general emphasis. For Watt, the novel is concerned with placing the human individual in his or her physical (as well as temporal) setting. Characters experience the world and interact causally in and with the space they inhabit. Indeed the novelistic description of setting and environment is seen to operate as a functional element within the narrative, conditioning further understanding of the experiences and perceptions of the protagonists.[8] In combining the points made by Watt and Bakhtin discussed thus far, we may state that the novel as a genre of artistic representation established a unique manner of conceptualizing time and space. Specifically the novel locates its field of representation in the zone of maximum temporal and spatial particularity, the open-endedness of contemporary reality.

Leaving the philosophical abstractions of time and space and their relation to the novel form, we may now refer to further familial traits of the novel: plot, character, and language. It is to be expected, of course, that these compositional elements of the genre will be effected by the novel's foundational and unique relationship to time and space. In this sense we are not really leaving the novelistic chronotope aside but rather, as we shall see, looking at plot, character and language through it.

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[8] Watt, *op. cit.*, 29.

The above caveat is especially relevant in the instance of Bakhtin. Bakhtin defines novelness and determines the novelistic quality of any narrative according to the extent of its exhibition of the novel's chronotopic representation of reality. His conception is one more of tendency than essential type and thus his account of a historical poetics provides various "novels" in history, each of which constitutes its own conception of plot according to its chronotope. This has significant implications for the discussion of plot according to Bakhtin's notion of the novel, as the novel for him is best discussed not in terms of what it represents but how it defines its spatial and temporal relationship with reality and in terms of the languages used in representation. Nonetheless it is possible to ascertain in generalized terms the subject matter for an understanding of a homogenized novelistic plot.

Due to the novel's contact with contemporary reality in all of its inconclusiveness, the subject matter of novelistic plot is virtually limitless. Indeed, the novel tends towards a representation of the new and incomplete, precisely that which has not been petrified into previously canonized or formulaic representations (though it is a unique feature of the novel's openness to any subject matter that even formulaic representations are possible):

> The novel, however, speculates in what is unknown. The novel devises various forms and methods for employing the surplus knowledge that the author has, that which the hero does not know or does not see. It is possible to utilize this authorial surplus in an external way, manipulating the narrative, or it can be used to complete the image of an individual (an externalization that is peculiarly novelistic). (32)

In more specific terms, however, it is possible to assert that the novel, given its general urge to avoid the conventional and formulaic, valorizes the fullest expression of human life and experience. In terms of the historical development of the novel, it is for this reason that the novel is closely related to elements of the folkloric, the comic and the satiric, as well as to such figures as the clown, the picaro and the rogue. Here the issue of novelistic plot is also related to language--to be discussed in greater detail below. For the novelistic plot, like character, provides a means for representing the differing languages and ideological systems which promote the novel's diversity of potential depiction. These styles, figures and languages allowed for a breakdown of hierarchically conceived realms of experience and the inclusion of the "lower" elements of life--particularly those relating to the body--into artistic expression. With regard to the breakdown of the canonized hierarchy of styles, Bakhtin's discussion reminds us immediately of Erich Auerbach's central point from *Mimesis*. He too traces the breakdown of the classical levels of style throughout Western literature's representation of reality. And although Auerbach is not specifically concerned with the novel (or even generic categories), his discussion of this dismantling of levels of style in the interests of attaining an ever fuller representation of human experience leads to the genre of the novel, the movement of realism and the cultural setting of nineteenth-century Europe:

> As I studied the various methods of interpreting human events in the literature of Europe, I found my interest becoming more precise and focused. Some guiding ideas began to crystallize, and these I sought to pursue. The first of these ideas concerns the doctrine of the ancients regarding the several levels of literary representation--a doctrine which was taken up again by every later classicistic movement. I came to understand that modern realism in the form it reached in France in the early nineteenth-century is, as an aesthetic phenomenon, characterized by complete emancipation from that doctrine.[9]

In the instance of both Bakhtin and Auerbach novelistic plot is ever concerned with the inclusion of all aspects of human experience--from the valorized realm of "high" ideals to the previously censored "low" sphere of the criminal and corporeal--as a means of approximating "the whole of life." In identifying the novel's primary criterion as "truth to individual experience," Watt emphasizes the novel's necessary urge toward the innovative and individualistic as the source of plot. Accordingly, for Watt, the English novel of the eighteenth-century is the first literary genre to derive its plots not from the traditional sources of mythology, history or pre-existing literature but rather from the uniqueness of imagined individual human experience. In this Watt's essential point recalls the fact--discussed in the previous chapter--that the propensity to locate the real and the truthful within the present and the particular rather than the general and universal recapitulates the enlightenment reversal of the former understanding of truth and the scholastic conception of realism. Watt has been challenged on this issue by Walter Reed who observes that the argument for the originality of eighteenth-century plot innovations could be "applied to *Don Quixote* as well, and in a more deliberate tour de force to Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe* and other late classical Greek romances."[10] Reed's point is well taken with regard to the date and place of the "rise" of the novel, though in the manner of Bakhtin's discussion of the matter, he serves to broaden the general observation that the novel tends toward plot depictions of the contemporary and individual.

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[9] Erich Auerbach *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, trans. W. R. Trask, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974): 554.

The element of character and the novel's generic manipulation of character are issues closely related to plot. As was noted above, Watt accounts for the rise of the novel in terms of a literary development analogous to, and partaking of, similar changes and developments in other fields of cultural and philosophic expression. Thus the novel's presumed primary criterion of truth to individual expression is viewed as a literary gesture similar to Descartes' *cogito ergo sum* of philosophy.[11] Lukács, in *The Theory of the Novel*, identifies the character of a novel as an individual with "an autonomous life of interiority" (66). In this respect the novelistic character differs from his or her epic counter-part in the contemporaneity and inconclusiveness, the individuality of his or her place in the world. Whereas the epic character partakes of the totality of the epic world as an agent typical and constituent of that enclosed system, the novelistic character is sent on his or her way seeking meaning and totality in an incomplete world. This feature of novelistic characterization is fundamental to the central task of the novel as seen by Lukács. For it is the character of a novel who, in searching for totality, provides form in life and thereby constructs at least a tentative wholeness reminiscent of epic totality:

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[10] Walter Reed, *op. cit.*, 21.

> The epic gives form to a totality of life that is rounded from within; the novel seeks, by giving form, to uncover and construct the concealed totality of life. The given structure of the object (i.e. the search, which is only a way of expressing the subject's recognition that neither objective life nor its relationship to the subject is spontaneously harmonious in itself) supplies an indication of the form-giving intention. All the fissures and rents which are inherent in the historical situation must be drawn into the form-

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[11] Watt, *op. cit.*, 15.

> giving process and cannot nor should be disguised by compositional means. Thus the fundamental form-determining intention of the novel is objectivised as the psychology of the novel's heroes: they are seekers. (60)

In his discussion of novelistic character, Bakhtin echoes the above essential point made by Lukács concerning the incompletion and variability inherent within the novel's requirements for characterization. As Bakhtin is less concerned than the young Lukács with a Hegelian teleology for art and life, his account lacks the nostalgia for epic wholeness characteristic of Lukács. Instead Bakhtin describes and celebrates the increasing dynamism and, consequently, realism of a narrative form which valorizes the depiction of human contact with the developing world of the present. His account, though motivated by a different perspective, nonetheless describes the same essential process as that indicated by Lukács. Whereas the epic character is sustained and contained by a sanctified world view, characters of the novel participate in and are conditioned by contact with the evolving, developing reality of the present. Implicated by constant and necessary contact with the reality of the inconclusive present, characters of the novel are as variable as the possibilities of the reality which enfold them:

> It is precisely the zone of contact with an inconclusive present (and consequently with the future) that creates the necessity of this incongruity of a man with himself. There always remains in him unrealized potential and unrealized demands. The future exists, and his future ineluctably touches upon the individual, has its roots in him.
>
> An individual cannot be completely incarnated into the flesh of existing sociohistorical categories. There is no mere form that would be able to incarnate once and forever all of his human possibilities and needs, no form in which he could exhaust himself down to the last word, like the tragic or epic hero. ... Reality as we have it in the novel is only one of many possible realities; it is not inevitable, nor arbitrary; it bears within itself other possibilities. (37)

In accounting for the development of this historical process of movement away from epic unity toward heightened engagement with reality and increased complexity in the depiction of man, Bakhtin accords popular-comic sources a determining role. As in the novel's innovations in the realm of plot, the introduction of comic aspects in characterization complicated and broadened the image of man by exposing a larger area to the possibility of representation:

> The destruction of epic distance and the transferral of the image of an individual from the distanced plane to the zone of contact with the inconclusive events of the present (and consequently of the future) result in a radical re-structuring of the image of the individual in the novel--and consequently in all literature. Folklore and popular-comic sources for the novel played a huge role in this process. Its first and essential step was the comic familiarization of the image of man. Laughter destroyed epic distance, it began to investigate man freely and familiarly, to turn him inside out, expose the disparity between his surface and his centre, between his potential and his reality. A dynamic authenticity was introduced into the image of man, dynamics of inconsistencyand tension between various factors of this image; man

> ceased to coincide with himself, and consequently men ceased to be exhausted entirely by the plots that contain them. (35)

Finally, the issue of novelistic characterization--as with plot--is bound up with the novel's method of representing language, the repository of the socio-ideological basis of any cultural unity. Character acts as a vehicle for the depiction of language: "Characteristic for the novel as a genre is not the image of a man in his own right, but a man who is precisely the *image of a language*" (336). We shall return to the specific importance of language for the novel momentarily.

Previously, we noted Watt's emphasis on the novel's "truth to individual experience--individual experience which is always unique and therefore new." We also noted Watt's description of the novel's emphasis on character as literature's manifestation of the more generalized epistemological orientation of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth-century toward the particular and individual. The element of character, like plot, is thereby seen to display the changes specific to the larger socio-cultural context. Watt is able to demonstrate this point through reference to the issue of naming in the eighteenth-century novel. The central characters of English eighteenth-century novels tend to have names as individual as their environment and social backgrounds in a gesture which contrasts significantly with former practices of naming characters in a manner indicative of their universal type.

The issue of naming and the designation of and reference to, things and characters in their full specificity, brings us to a point of central importance to the novel--certainly in the context of contemporary criticism--that of language. Each of the above discussed familial traits of the novel--time, space, plot and character--have been shown to place literary representation of reality in the uniquely novelistic context of an evolving, inconclusive present which particularizes events and human experience. It is the task of the central trait of language to mediate the heterogeneity of this inconclusive developing and contemporaneous reality within a medium which, while allowing for the diversity of all possibility, does not hinder communication within the socio-cultural context. Language, then, becomes a trait of singular importance in any understanding of the novel. For while the spatial and temporal coordinates of the novel's contact with reality may be posited as the contemporaneous present, the functional possibility of such a contact is dependant upon a referential understanding of language. Thus, before turning to an account of language in the novel, it will be necessary to discuss briefly the assumed conditions of language which underpin the novel's particular use of language as a medium of contact between reality and narrative. Of course this distinction between the functional possibilities of language in general and the particular uses of language in the novel form is arbitrary as the two areas are interdependent, each forms the conditions for the other's existence. Nevertheless, in light of much recent literary criticism of language and novelistic representation, it is important to establish a clear understanding of the function of language as a basis for even a "familial" definition of the novel. Furthermore, such an understanding is necessary to establish the conditions for a concept of representation which will accommodate twentieth-century literature's manipulation of even a loosely defined novel. Rather than engage with the variously articulated positions which dispute the referential function of language--a study of its own which lies outside the scope of our investigation--we will observe, with Christopher Prendergast, that this attack seeks in essence to deny the possibility of any relationship between language and the world:

> The semiological removal of any component of reference from the 'signifying play' of language attacks the possibility of literary mimesis at its very foundations. To deny that there is some form of relations between language and an object-world is to undermine the theoretical supports of mimesis in a manner that leaves them strictly beyond repair. The issue of 'reference' is thus in many respects the crux of the question of mimesis.[12]

We thus begin with the need to consolidate a satisfactory notion of reference.

In previous attempts to account for the nature of language's relationship with reality, various optical metaphors have been employed.[13] Each of these optical metaphors, however, assumes a correspondence of transparency between sign and signified which ignores the potentially intrusive effects of language's mediating process. Nor are these optical metaphors capable of responding to the more radical severance of language from reality exemplified in an entire tradition issuing from Saussure. What seems required is a view of language which respects the autonomy of the linguistic system but which locates that system within a social setting and provides for contact between the two. One such approach is exemplified by Prendergast who indicates the notion of language's referential function, identifying language as the medium uniting fictional narrative with the factual world:

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[12] Christopher Prendergast *The Order of Mimesis*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986): 69. Prendergast himself does an excellent job of reviewing some of the more influential positions which refute the notion of language as a referential medium.

> One major alternative line of enquiry is by way of the claim that what marks the language of literary mimesis is its *referential* character. The language of the mimetic text does not 'mirror' reality, is not 'transparent' to reality; it 'hooks' on to reality by virtue of a relation that holds between linguistic expressions and what they stand for in the world (objects, places persons, states of affairs, etc.). By exploiting the referring properties of language, the mimetic text knits the order of 'fiction' into the order of 'fact,' and thus ensures that process of recognition whereby the reader connects the world produced by the text with the world of which he himself has direct or indirect knowledge. (61)

In authorizing his discussion of reference, Prendergast returns us to Wittgenstein and the applicability of his theories of language as a socially constituted medium of communication.

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[13] For a brief overview of the related metaphor of literature as mirror see, James I. Wimsatt, "The mirror as Metaphor for Literature," in *What is Literature?* ed. Paul Hernadi (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978): 127-40.

Wittgenstein's conception of language as a medium of communication and of understanding is based not on immutable correspondences between things and words but on the semantic uses a community assigns to words according to the language of which they are a part:

> But if we had to name anything which is the life of the sign, we should say that it was its *use*. ... The mistake we are liable to make could be expressed thus: We are looking for the use of a sign, but we look for it as though it were an object *co-existing* with the sign. (One of the reasons for this mistake is again that we are looking for a "thing corresponding to a substantive.")
>
> The sign (the sentence) gets its significance from the system of signs, from the language to which it belongs. Roughly: understanding a sentence means understanding a language.[14]

Individual communities engaging in a language game, a form of life, establish rules by which meaning is created and received. The practical social goals of co-existence and understanding necessitate an at least tentatively bounded world of meaning. For if humans within their communities wish to communicate, they must agree on a defined set of "rules" for the establishment of meaning, on the referential use of words in their particular language game. Language, then, is not a series of essentialist correspondences between words and objects, nor is it an entirely autonomous linguistic system of random semiosis, but rather a community's socially constituted means of communication:

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[14] Wittgenstein, *The Blue and Brown Books*, *op. cit.*, 4-5.

> 241. "So you are saying that human agreement decides what is true and what is false?"--It is what human beings *say* that is true and false; and they agree in the *language* they use. That is not agreement in opinions but in form of life.
> 242. If language is to be a means of communication there must be agreement not only in definition but also (queer as this may sound) in judgements. This seems to abolish logic, but does not do so.--It is one thing to describe methods of measurement, and another to obtain and state results of measurements. But what we call "measuring" is partly determined by a certain constancy in results of measurement.[15]

Wittgenstein's approach to language as a social construct implemented for the creation and communication of knowledge about the exterior world has applications beyond its theoretical ability to provide for the relationship between the word and the world. For later in this study, in the context of novels which experiment with both the language and generic conventions of the novel, the notion of socially constituted meaning will have particular application in reference to artistic communities with specific aesthetic and even ideological goals.

Having established at least a tentative philosophical basis for the linguistic relationship between language and reality, we may return to the specific use made of language in the novel form. Ian Watt in his discussion of the novel's manipulation of language underlines the eighteenth-century's urge to particularization manifested in an understanding of language as a primarily referential medium. Here Watt is distinguishing the novel's utilitarian use of language as a tool of concretized, realistic expression rather than as a source of beauty and aesthetic interest in and of itself. The novel, according to Watt, uses language in the manner defined as proper by Locke: "to convey the knowledge of things." In utilizing these referential functions of language, in keeping with broadly based philosophical changes within the episteme, the novel distinguished itself from earlier narrative genres:

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[15] Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations, op. cit.*, 88e.

> It would appear, then, that the function of language is much more largely referential in the novel than in other literary forms; that the genre itself works by exhaustive presentation rather than by elegant concentration. (33)

Mikhail Bakhtin affords language extraordinary power as one of the most important defining features of the novel alongside the chronotope. As the fundamental formal constituent of the novel, language, and its specific use within the novel, not only distinguishes novelistic discourse from poetic discourse but also determined the very historical development of the novel form by determining the range of its representational scope. Both of these functions derive from Bakhtin's understanding of language. According to a conception not unlike Wittgenstein's, Bakhtin sees language as a socially constructed medium of communication, an abstract linguistic system which finds completion only in its socio-ideological use within a community. Within even a single cultural setting the normative, unitary language which ensures communication within a group is confronted and engulfed by a variety of competing socio-ideologically based languages each of which presses at the boundaries of the accepted language;

> We are taking language not as a system of abstract grammatical categories, but rather language conceived as ideologically saturated, language as a world view, even as a concrete opinion, insuring a *maximum* of mutual understanding in all spheres of ideological life. Thus a unitary language gives expression to forces working toward concrete verbal and ideological unification and centralization, which develop in vital connection with the process of sociopolitical and cultural centralization. ... But the centripetal forces of the life of language, embodied in a "unitary language," operate in the midst of heteroglossia. At any given moment of its evolution, language is stratified not only into linguistic dialects in the strict sense of the word (according to formal linguistic markers, especially phonetic), but also--and for us this is the essential point--into languages that are socio-ideological: languages of social groups, "professional" and "generic" languages, languages of generations and so forth.[16]

Social diversity within the language community creates the conditions for linguistic variety, the heteroglossia which the novel incorporates into its distinctive structure. Unlike the novel, the high genres of poetic discourse assimilate linguistic diversity into the unitary language of higher socio-ideological levels. As in plot and character, the novel utilizes the variant languages of low genres and social strata to break the stratification of styles and re-introduce heteroglossia and a fuller representation of the community into artistic representation.

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[16] M.M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, *op. cit.*, 271-72.

Indeed, on the basis of language and its revelation through plot and character, a bi-part history of the novel is proffered by Bakhtin according to stylistic development. The first line of stylistic development within the novel is characterized by a "Ptolemaic" conception of a unitary language. In this instance, the ideological diversity of the world is contained within the monologism of a single language employed in representation. This is language and representation of an enclosed belief system, one which is conceptually self-sufficient and thus resistant to modification or the incursion of languages from alternate ideologies. Novels of this line employ a single literary language which approximates the ideology exemplified in accepted plot forms and character types. Depiction of the ideals of this first line--the loftiest and most perfect--is conducted in opposition to the vulgar diversity, changeability and heteroglossia of the social world. These are novels of unitary language and closed ideology.

Novels of the second line of stylistic development are based on a relativized, "Galilean" system of heteroglossia. Rather than resisting heteroglossia in the interests of a canonized world view, this form courts the diversity of varying generic features, languages and their sustaining ideological contexts. It is through heteroglossia, a diversity of languages, that the novel incorporates and represents the greatest number of social groups and ideologies, the greatest volume and complexity of human experience and life:

> In novels of the Second Line there emerges the following imperative, one that was later often hailed as constitutive for the novel as a genre: "the novel must be a full and comprehensive reflection of its era."
>
> The imperative should be formulated differently: the novel must represent all the social and ideological voices of its era, that is, all the era's languages that have any claim to being significant; the novel must be a microcosm of heteroglossia. (411)

Through the use of language which is theoretically and pragmatically related to the human community of isolated socio-ideological settings, the novel assures its connection with external reality and emphasizes its generic distinctiveness.

With the above distinction of language and the novel, we conclude our purview of five of the central familial traits of the novel form: the abstract locational determinants of time and space, the compositional elements of plot and character and finally the communicative medium of language. Based on our review of the functional importance of these five traits, we may tentatively describe the novel as an extended fictional narrative located spatially and temporally in the inconclusive reality of an historically developing present. The thematic (plot) and character composition of the novel reflects its placement in contemporaneity by striving for the specificity and uniqueness of individual experience within a larger historical and social setting. In a process implemented through characterization and plot structure, the novel employs language as a referential medium capable of offering all potential facets of social and ideological experience up to representation. This "familial" definition of the novel remains self-consciously flexible in a gesture which recapitulates the central defining feature of the novel as a form of literature unenclosed by final definition and constantly evolving as a result of its sustaining contact with unfinished, developing reality.

Before leaving our discussion of the novel it remains to discuss another "metacritical" element of the novel as a genre of literature distinguished by its particular relationship with reality. This point will prove crucial to our discussion of representation in the following chapter and essential to our understanding of the tremendous range and diversity of expression within the twentieth-century novel. Thus far we have described the central familial traits of the novel and the functional workings of language, we need now to acknowledge that facet of the novel which allows it to adapt to and represent the reality of its socio-historic setting regardless of the nature of the reality proposed. For it is an important component of the most liberal, comprehensive and protean of genres, that though the novel is necessarily linked to the inconclusive reality of the present, it can under no circumstances prescribe the ideological or aesthetic limits of that reality. The novel sets structural limits for the depiction of reality; it presumes no prescriptive norms for reality itself. Watt makes this point in a parallel discussion of realism and the novel: "the novel's realism does not reside in the kind of life it presents, but in the way it presents it" (11).

Thus we are returned to the realization that the novel's generic particularity derives its unique composition as a particular set of narrative conventions receptive to the representation of reality. The novel is the literary form maximally open to the imprint of any conception of reality, and indeed, depends for its existence upon its function as a means of expressing the reality of any conceived setting. In this sense the novel is a genre of investigation and knowledge, a genre of epistemology. As Bakhtin notes: "When the novel becomes the dominant genre, epistemology becomes the dominant discipline" (15). So too J. Paul Hunter observes: "Most novels seem to begin in epistemology; certainly most address epistemological issues in ways that suggest urgent engagement."[17] We recall as well Lukács' emphasis on the novel's search for totality and its use of characters as seekers of epistemological certainty. And finally, we remember that Watt places the "rise" of the novel in the context of broad philosophical and cultural changes which, although they may not have directly influenced the novel's development, certainly contributed to the establishment of a setting conducive to it.[18] Given the novel's special relationship to the investigative tendencies of epistemology and its necessary relationship to social settings, we may well expect that the novel of the twentieth-century--the century of an explosion of epistemological issues and positions--will demonstrate tremendous diversity of expression. It remains the hypothesis of this study, however, that the generic form of the novel as delineated above remains receptive to these changes and even requires them. The next chapter will examine the unique interface between literature and socio-cultural settings as the necessary preconditions for the novel's representation of reality.

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[17] J. Paul Hunter, *Before Novels: The Cultural Contexts of Eighteenth-Century English Fiction*, (New York: Norton, 1990): 44.

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[18] It would be possible to extend the list of critics who emphasize the novel's involvement in epistemological issues to numerous further examples. One example which deserves special notice is McKeon, *op. cit*.

Chapter 3

Literary History and the Social Form of Literature

In the previous two chapters, an attempt has been made to clarify some of the issues essential to a systematic understanding of the changing forms of representation in the twentieth-century novel. Initially, the theoretical issue of mimesis was disentangled from the critical concept of realism as a means of establishing a clearer understanding of representation and the relationship between literature and the world. Upon the basis of this perception of representation, a descriptive definition of the novel was proffered which emphasized this form's fluidity and adaptability to changing historical and social conditions. According to this definition, moreover, the novel was identified as a genre located in maximal proximity to an inconclusive, historically developing reality. Similarly, in discussing the distinction between mimesis and realism, it was suggested that realism was a movement expressive of literature's perennially mimetic, representational function. Furthermore, that realism's particular manner of expressing this function was dependent upon the unique epistemological and artistic conditions latent in the socio-historic context of the European nineteenth-century. In both of the above attempts to establish the theoretical basis for the present study, the importance of the social and historical dimension of the novel was foregrounded.

Recognition of this importance has the concomitant effect of emphasising the practical consideration that any study of the changing forms of representation in the twentieth-century novel is perforce returned to the problem of literary history, the problem of formulating a precise understanding of the historical character of literature's relationship to its surrounding world. Thus, before turning to a concrete discussion of the representational forms manifested in various novels, it will be necessary first to clarify the theoretical nature of literature's connections with the novel's defining socio-historic context, and secondly, to indicate the type of methodology which will consistently permit a verifiable analysis of concrete texts from such varying historical and cultural environments. With these goals in mind, then, this two-part chapter will be both theoretical and logistical: theoretical in its attempt to wrestle with the hoary problem of literature's relation to its reality, socially and historically defined; logistical in its setting forth of the general guiding principles which will underlie the examination of the individual novels in the subsequent chapters of this study.

That all literary texts exist within socio-historic contexts is an essential fact seemingly beyond dispute. Differences immediately arise, however, in the process of any attempt to define and assess the specific nature of the connection between texts and their socio-historic frameworks.

Accordingly, each of the many "approaches" to literature have in their various ways attempted to formulate a position vis-a-vis the historicity of literature in a way compatible with their particular vision of literature's form and function. Nevertheless, and despite the prevalence of interest in the issue of literature's historicity, the discipline of literary history has, as Hans Robert Jauss notes, fallen into disrepute since its high point of respectability in the nineteenth-century.[1] This fall from academic grace has its source in a variety of sins too complex to explicate here but which may be conveniently grouped in the tendency to ignore the theoretical challenges and advancements of a succession of literary theoretical trends from Russian formalism to deconstructionism.[2] The one recent notable exception to the abandonment of a historical approach to the study of literature--the New Historicism--defines itself precisely by its use of a historical method while in acute self-conscious awareness of poststructuralism's questioning of the previous theoretical assumptions of historicism.[3] With a sideward glance at some of these challenges and advancements and as a means of introducing the position advanced in and through this study, it will prove useful to step back, as it were, from the immediate issue of the historical quality of literature's relation to its social context first to propose some general observations about the socially contingent quality of reality itself. From here it will then be possible to discuss literature in its position as both producer and product of social reality.

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[1] H.R. Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, Trans. T. Bahti. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982): 3. See also J.J. McGann, *The Beauty of Inflections: Literary Investigations in Historical Method and Theory*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985) "Introduction," 1-14.

[2] See Marilyn Butler, "Against Tradition: The Case for a Particularized Historical Method" in J.J. McGann ed., *Historical Studies and Literary Criticism*, (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985): 25-47. See also J.J. McGann, "The Scandal of Referentiality," (Chapter 5, Part 2.) in *Social Values and Poetic Acts: The Historical Judgement of Literary Work*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988): 115-31.

1. Literature and the World:

To begin a literary study with a general discussion of so broad a concept as reality is at best inauspicious and at worst inappropriate. For "reality" constitutes a philosophical province often travelled, though rarely successfully mapped. Nonetheless, some form of articulated position concerning the nature of reality is required as a necessary conceptual basis for a discussion of literature's relation to the social world around it. Of course, such a basis can in no way pretend to conclusiveness in the realms of philosophy or sociology, but can, nonetheless, effectively inform a literary understanding of the issue. Freed from the need to develop a conceptually independent position concerning reality, therefore, this study will turn immediately to the work of others. Thus, taking direction from the sociologically informed study of Berger and Luckman, reality may here be conveniently, if simplistically, described as "a quality appertaining to phenomena that we recognize as having a being independent of our own volition."[4] This admittedly reductive definition has the value of avoiding the question of what reality is phenomenally in its myriad forms and contexts of expression--the source of a philosophical issue with a long history of debate. Instead, the focus becomes not what reality is, but rather how it is produced. In Berger's and Luckmann's compelling study, reality is understood to be socially produced by human beings in their continual processes of signification. Humans constantly engage in a process of producing their reality as a necessarily social enterprise. Reality, as socially created, can have no ontological status apart from the human activity enacted to create it.[5] So developed, however, n incongruity would seem to emerge in an understanding of reality as subjectively created by humans and yet objectively separate from their perceptions and volition. As Berger and Luckmann themselves pose the contradiction: "How is it possible that subjective meanings

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[3] For a general discussion of the claims and failings of the "new historicism" see H. Aram Veeser, ed. *The New Historicism* (New York: Routledge, 1989), especially Brook Thomas, "The New Historicism and other Old-fashioned Topics" 181-203, and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, "Literary Criticism and the Politics of the New Historicism," 213-224. See also Marjorie Levinson, *et. al.*, *Rethinking Historicism* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989).

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[4] P. Berger and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, (New York: Anchor Books, 1967): 1.

[5] Berger and Luckmann, *op. cit.*, 61.

become objective facticities?" (18). In the context of a literary study, the specifics of Berger's and Luckmann's response to this question is not as interesting as the issues raised. For in responding, Berger and Luckmann indicate the manner in which meaning is created by communities of human beings in continuing processes of signification. The most widespread and coercive form of signification in any community is language. Through the various forms of language use--including among them literary--in specific settings, subjective experience is typified and rendered objectively accessible to others. Communally recognized forms of signification thus become the means by which individual meaning is transformed into social reality. Looked at from another perspective, reality constitutes the accretion of individual experience made social and objective through a communally formulated semiotic medium, most often language.

Clifford Geertz, in an influential study, which will here be of use in moving this discussion from the abstractions of what reality is and how it is constituted to the sphere of living culture, also indicates the semiotic qualities of the various significations humans create and enact in formulating their specific social reality, their culture.[6] Although Geertz's primary interest is with anthropology and ethnography, his discussion has significant analogies with the present literary study; particularly as he is concerned with interpretation and the attempt to formulate a methodology for examining various examples of cultural behaviour. In so developing his methodology, Geertz settles upon a notion derived from Gilbert Ryle of the "thick description" as an interpretive venture whereby the analyst sifts through the various layers and structures of signification to arrive at as full an understanding of a cultural event or document as possible. In a gesture reminiscent of Berger and Luckmann, Geertz bypasses the complex issue of the ontological status of any cultural event--as a thing of the world it perforce has social meaning--to concentrate attention on its importance. With this conceptually pragmatic approach, he indicates the extent to which the ultimate claim to success of any interpretive "thick description" resides in its ability to explain cultural phenomena. Finally, Geertz stresses the manner in which the kind of interpretive endeavour he is advocating proceeds from localized, microcosmic examinations of specific phenomena. Such localized studies then provide the locus for reflection on the larger social context from which they derive. This final point and the assertion that the aim of localized thick descriptions "is to draw large conclusions from small, but very densely textured facts; to support broad assertions about the role of culture in the construction of collective life by engaging them exactly with complex specifics" returns us to the requirements and assumptions of the present study.[7] Here we shall be concerned with examining individual novels as the complex specifics inextricably related to their surrounding and engendering cultural contexts, both the literary system and the broader socio-historical environment. For it is a founding presumption of this study that the examination of individual novels will provide insight concerning the specific relations between a particular novel and its socio-historic base as well as more generalized knowledge elucidating the formative power of encompassing ideological settings on the very structure of the novel form. Novels, as the appendages of specific social and historical settings, will reveal themselves to be determined in their formal variations as much by extra-literary--ideological--systems as the localized aesthetic system of the novel tradition. Thus it will be demonstrated that the transformational agency behind structural shifts within the novel form resides, ultimately, in the historically changing demands of the novel's social environment.

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[6] See C. Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture" in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, (New York: Basic Books, 1973): 3-30.

At this point, Mikhail M. Bakhtin's and Pavel M. Medvedev's *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship* provides an excellent entry into the related questions of the socially formulated nature of reality and the relationship between the formal and thematic composition of literature and its historico-cultural milieu.[8] Apart from being one of the earliest studies to approach systematically the above sociological issues with a refined sense of historical awareness, *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship* does so within the form of a nascent critique of formalist literary historiography. This early attempt to confront formalist innovations in literary historiography and poetics addresses the very issues which comprise much of the ancestry of contemporary resistance to literary historiography and which were ignored in subsequent studies of literary history.

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[7] C. Geertz *ibid.*, 28.

As in the above instances of Berger, Luckmann and Geertz, though now from a literary perspective, Bakhtin emphasizes the social nature of reality--what he terms *ideological reality*--and, in particular, its semiotic quality. He demonstrates the manner in which each phenomenon of human creation takes on meaning only through some form of expression within a larger social setting:

> All the products of ideological creation--works of art, scientific works, religious symbols and rites, etc.--are material things, part of the practical reality that surrounds man. It is true that these are things of a special nature, having significance, meaning, inner value. But these meanings and values are embodied in material things and actions. They cannot be realized outside of some developed material.
>
> Nor do philosophical views, beliefs, or even shifting ideological moods exist within man, in his head or in his 'soul.' *They become ideological*

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[8] M.M. Bakhtin and P.M. Medvedev, *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship: A Critical Introduction to Sociological Poetics*, tran. A.J. Wehrle (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985). In the following pages when mentioning this text I will refer to Bakhtin only.

> *reality only by being realized in words, actions, clothing, manners, and organizations of people and things--in a word: in some definite semiotic material.* Through this material they become a practical part of the reality surrounding man. (Bakhtin, 7, emphasis mine.)

The very process of social signification, the creation of ideological meaning takes place for individuals not in a formless void but in the framework of a pre-established ideological world. Human beings and the collective in which they function are in a constant dialectical process of influence and development. Neither the concrete human nor the abstract "social consciousness" of the collective can exist in isolation but find existence rather in a continual process of mutual influence, change and development.

This continuous operation of the creation of meaning in the social world through a dialectic of influence between social community and individual has its analogue in the more confined social space of the literary system. Literary works are also social products which take on meaning in the context of their existence and expression within the specific collective of the literary system--a system which derives its ideological form in relation to other social systems. Thus in the instance of an individual literary text, the spheres of interaction are two-fold: that between the individual work and the aesthetic system; and that between the individual work and broader social orders. Bakhtin expresses this multi-faceted process of literary and social interaction in the form of a "simple dialectic:"

> To repeat: every literary phenomenon, like every other ideological phenomenon, is simultaneously determined from without (extrinsically) and from within (intrinsically). From within it is determined by literature itself, and from without by other spheres of social life. But, in being determined from within, the literary work is thereby determined externally also, for the literature which determines it is itself determined from without. And being determined from without, it thereby is determined from within, for internal factors determine it precisely as a literary work in its specificity and in connection with the whole literary situation, and not outside that situation. Thus intrinsic turns out to be extrinsic, and the reverse.
>
> This is a simple dialectic. (Bakhtin, p. 29.)

The task of the literary historian in light of this dialectic, then, is to work through and assess the importance of what has been above termed the intrinsic and extrinsic influences on individual texts, the interconnecting and mutual influences of the social and literary realms.

Obviously, the above position concerning the semiotically expressed and social nature of reality and the dialectical interconnectedness of literature and society has specific effects on the methodology of literary history for individual texts. The reasons for preferring a microcosmic approach to the "thick description" of literary texts has already been indicated above. This approach would seem to correspond with Bakhtin's stated objectives for literary history in principle:

> Literary history is concerned with the concrete life of the literary work in the unity of the generating literary environment, the literary environment in the generating ideological environment, and the latter, finally, in the generating socioeconomic environment which permeates it. The work of the literary historian should therefore proceed in unbroken interaction

> with the history of other ideologies and with socioeconomic history. (Bakhtin, 27-28.)

Given the range of expressed goals, Bakhtin's requirements would indeed seem to call for a "thick" description. As a practical consideration, the range and inclusivity of such a project for literary history would also suggest the use of the essay form, the form to be utilized in the chapters of this study below. For the alternating emphases required by this type of literary history eschews programmatic schemes and predictive theories rather to call for the descriptive, interpretive mobility of the essay form, a form which may describe and probe without explicitly prescribing. Applied to the needs of cultural anthropology, Geertz is here too in essential agreement:

> ...that the essay, whether of thirty pages or three hundred, has seemed the natural genre in which to present cultural interpretations and the theories sustaining them, and why, if one looks for systematic treatises in the field, one is soon disappointed, the more so if one finds any. (Geertz, 25.)

Accordingly, the "methodology" developed with the aims of this study in mind will function as a series of guiding principles and categories rather than a universally applicable formula.

While the position thus far advanced and to be developed below and concretized in later chapters is in essential agreement with Bakhtin, there are significant differences of approach. Bakhtin's study, for instance, places catalytic emphasis on the influences of the socioeconomic base of literary production which will not be emulated here.[9] This study, as well, will tend to remain within the confines of the literary system, examining the effects of social contexts upon the intrinsic elements of the aesthetic realm. For this reason, the essentially theoretical issues of mimesis and a functional definition of the novel form have been discussed in the terms of this study as the basis for a "thick description" derived from the microcosms of individual novels.

2. A Methodology of Literary History:

It remains now, then, to establish the particular principles of a methodology for the literary-historical examination of novels which places them within their particular ideological horizons, their socio-cultural contexts. In recent years a variety of approaches have been proffered in literary studies as a gesture of renewed interest in literary history and the sociology of literature in general.[10] Each of these recent approaches has been formulated cognizant of the range of positions available to literary historiography in literature studies, particularly in the wake of the twentieth-century's theoretical advancements from formalism to deconstructionism. Relative to the numerous positions available, the articulated concern of most approaches--as with the present one--is the attempt to steer a careful course between the extremities of use or misuse of literary history. A position is required between the extremes of positivist historiography, with its attendant tendency to distil complex literary works down to homogenous documents or isolated "facts" within a contained historical setting, and formalist theorizing which denies all diachrony to release literature into the decontextualized, eternal present of each reader's unique interpretation. Rather than succumb to the limits of either of the above positions, a programme is needed with which to permit a dialogue (or dialectic) between the engendering social and historical context of a literary work and the present of reader interpretation. The approach to be developed below is heavily indebted to Dominick LaCapra and is comprised of five central fields of inquiry essential to a sensitive historical understanding of novels in their complex

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[9] The importance Bakhtin ascribes here seems more theoretical than practical as it is rarely substantiated in his study. This measure of formal Marxism may in itself be ascribed to the extrinsic social forces of Bakhtin's own post-revolutionary context on his theoretical writing. It is implicitly a part of the "liberal" intent of this study to resist deference to the kind of homogeneous, prescriptive schema of historical development which Marxism can represent.

[10] See among others H.R. Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, tran. T. Bahti (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), D. LaCapra, *Rethinking Intellectual History: Texts, Contexts, Language*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), *History and Criticism*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), D. Schwarz, "The Case for Humanistic Poetics," in *Why the Novel Matters: A Postmodern Perplex*, eds., M. Spilka and C. McCracken-Flesher, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), and J.J. McGann, *Social Values and Poetic Acts: The Historic Judgement of Literary Work*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988). Lucien Goldmann, *Pour une sociologie du roman*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1964) represents a systematic attempt to relate literary

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production to social conditions but in doing so posits a too rigid homology between literary production and the liberal market economy: "La forme romanesque nous paraît être en effet *la transposition sur le plan littéraire de la vie quotidienne dans la société individualiste née de la production pour le marché*. Il existe une *homologie rigoureuse* entre la forme littéraire du roman, telle que nous venons de la définir à la suite de Lukács et de Girard, et la relation quotidienne des hommes avec les biens en général, et par extension, des hommes avec les autres hommes, dans une société productrice pour le marché." 24.

social matrixes. In discussing intentions, motivations, culture, the corpus and formal structure, this study will be guided by, though not restricted to, LaCapra's formulation in *Rethinking Intellectual History*. LaCapra's framework has the advantage of being the most inclusive, though the formulations of others in similar conceptual terms will prove to augment LaCapra's basis profitably. For the guiding intent of any such methodological approach is to develop a position which allows for the most objective reconstruction possible of the originating socio-ideological context of a historical work. It is, in the words of Elizabeth Fox-Genovese an attempt to "work at the juncture of the symbiosis between text and context, with context understood to mean the very conditions of textural production and dissemination."[11] Only on the basis of a renewed understanding of the unique and specific conditions which influenced the constitution of the original work is a critical dialogue with the historical past possible. Only in such conditions is the historical past refused the possibility of arresting interpretive development and, a more persistent danger, the present prevented from projecting contemporary concerns onto an alien context.[12]

The concept of authorial intention is central to a historically based understanding of literary works. Criticism requires a base of historically and socially determined intentions from which to assess the links between authors, their works and their engendering environment.[13] Despite this importance for a socio-historical criticism, in many contemporary approaches the concept of authorial intention has been sacrificed--the "death" of the author--in the interests of interpretive freedom or rendered a fallacy, the source of which lies in the supposedly unrealizable goal of re-constructing authorial intentions on the basis of isolated and inviolable artistic structures. In these instances an attempt is made to rescue interpretation from the monologism imposed upon meaning by a sovereign, proprietorial author. In questioning the applicability of authorial intentionality to literary studies, such positions have had the positive ancillary effect of highlighting the complex nature of any process of communication between the poles of intention and reception, where myriad psychological, contextual, historical and interpretive forces imperfectly mediate the communicative process. Nonetheless, confidence in the existence of an intending consciousness behind any discourse is central to historically based interpretation. Recourse to authorial intentions--even when they are available--is, of course, not the only arbiter of final interpretive meaning; it is, however, a potential starting point to be used in conjunction with other principles. Authorial intentions bridge the gap between the distances of reader and author and their respective contexts. It is via knowledge of the individual creative consciousness that the relative position between the artist, his or her artistic work and the historic community may be better ascertained and assessed.

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[11] Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *op.cit.*, 217.

[12] See J.J. McCann, *The Beauty of Inflections* and *Social Values and Poetic Acts* for an articulate account of the interpretive issues at stake in the development of an historical approach to criticism.

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[13] J.J. McGann indicates the particular relevance of intentions in evaluating the social conditions of literature at its material point of origin: "The expressed intentions, or purposes, of an author are also significant for understanding a poem. At the point of origin those intentions are codified in the author's choice of time, place, and form of publication--or none of the above, by which I mean his decision *not* to publish at all, or to circulate in manuscript, or to print privately. All such decisions take the form of specific social acts of one sort or another, and those acts enter as part of the larger social act which is the poem in its specific (and quite various) human history." *The Beauty of Inflections*, 23-24.

E.D. Hirsch, in developing the principles necessary for validity in interpretation, has formulated a critical difference between meaning and significance as a means of forestalling the arrestation of interpretive significance outside the context of authorial intention while at the same time maintaining the primacy of authorial intentions for interpretive meaning.[14] Although both categories depend upon the existence of authorial intention, the concept of "significance" extends beyond the intended verbal meaning of the text in its historical setting into broader interpretive contexts. Interpretation has its source in authorial intention and meaning, though it is not contained there, but rather informs the significances of audiences in varying cultural and even temporal interpretive settings. Thus, authorial intention, without impinging upon the interpretive freedom of varying audiences, is maintained as a useful tool in reformulating the original context of artistic composition.

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[14] See E.D. Hirsch, Jr., *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967) and *The Aims of Interpretation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976). Hirsch, in his specific formulation, has settled upon the terms significance and meaning though the primary importance of his work is as an example of a method which allows for the dialectical movement between the historical object of interpretation and the subjective process of interpretation. While each interact they retain their ontological integrity.

The second category of approach, that of the relationship between the author's life and the text, is problematized in much the same way as the issue of authorial intentions. Quite apart from the vagaries of psychological approaches which are quite justifiably held in suspicion as unconfirmable, great care is required in treating the events of an author's life in relation to his or her imaginative production. Nonetheless, the necessary caveat warning against the dangers of biographical criticism, the temptation to read a novel as the facile record and direct product of an author's life, does not invalidate the principle of a more generalized approach which sees the author's life as part of the larger set of social and historical forces which provide the setting for his or her art. Before any relationship may be proposed between text and author, it is necessary first of all to interpret the "text" of the author's life, to place it in its social, historical and even aesthetic environment. This form of critical understanding, inviting entry into those other spheres of ideological meaning which inform the historical context of the text, presupposes greater and greater degrees of generalisation and interpretation. Nonetheless, as in the case of Maxim Gorky's complicated relationship with his own creative oeuvre, depending upon his public ideological role, the events of an author's life are often salient to the fullest understanding of his or her work.

Much of this present chapter has been taken up with a discussion of literature's relation to social reality, in particular the socio-cultural or ideological context of any text. The third category of the relationship between an author and his or her work and society and culture indicates the more precise manner in which the specifics of this relationship may be accounted for. Here questions of scope and profundity influence types of investigation. It is prohibitively difficult to calibrate the direct influence of, let alone relationship between, a single text or group of texts with its ideological horizon when such a horizon is cast in terms of an age, an entire cultural tradition or discursive paradigm. Foucault's history of discursive practices is one such large-scaled attempt as are those which appeal to external meta-critical or teleologically framed concepts of reference such as, for example, Marxism. This study will avoid such large-scaled attempts and concentrate on more socially and historically local communities. Dominick LaCapra has succinctly described the types of "communities of discourse" appropriate to such an undertaking as this:

> The more delimited school, movement, network of associations, or reference group would seem to provide the more immediate complex of shared assumptions or pertinent considerations that operate, tacitly or explicitly, to shape the intellectual's sense of significant questions and

> modes of inquiry. (49)

The applicability of such an approach is also grounded in the desire to remain predominantly within the realm of the literary system where schools and movements provide the most convenient point of contact with, and expression of, a specific social or cultural ideology. In a similar gesture, Pierre Bourdieu has developed the concept of the literary field (*champ*), the unique social universe which exists autonomously though nonetheless interacts with the surrounding social environment:

> The literary field (one may also speak of the artistic field, the philosophical field, etc.) is an independent social universe with its own laws of functioning, its specific relations of force, its dominants and its dominated, and so forth. Put another way, to speak of 'field' is to recall that literary works are produced in a particular social universe endowed with particular institutions and obeying specific laws. ... This field is neither a vague social background nor even a *milieu artistique* like a universe of personal relations between artists and writers (perspectives adopted by those who study 'influences'). It is a veritable social universe where, in accordance with its particular laws, ... The important fact, for the interpretation of works, is that this autonomous social universe functions somewhat like a prism which *refracts* every external determination: demographic, economic, or political events are always retranslated according to the specific logic of the field, and it is by this intermediary that they act on the logic of the development of works.[15]

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[15] Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*, ed. Randal Johnson, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993): 163-64. Bourdieu provides the example of a contemporary critic very much concerned with providing a sociological investigation of the novel and in this sense replicates concerns central to this study. Ultimately, however, his methodology as developed in "The Structure of *Sentimental Education*," lacks the kind of methodological specificity which I am trying to proffer here.

In reference to the two categories of investigation discussed here--that of authorial intention and of social or cultural context, J.J. McGann, in a complementary approach, provides further indication of how a concrete study of the relationship between an author's work and his or her cultural environment may be undertaken.[16] McGann's overall critical programme of an approach to literary history is based on the dynamics of an essential dialectic existing between a work of art's point of origin and its point of reception. Accordingly, two primary, inter-locking histories inform the interpretation and understanding of any text. The first history is derived from the author's intentions and purposes insofar as they may be reconstructed and reconstrued in the process of interpretation and critical investigation. The second history involves that of the critical reaction to the work. Here, in establishing the relationship between authors and their cultural contexts, study is turned to the full range of apparatus that any society has for expressing its collective opinion about a given work. This apparatus may extend from reviews and critical commentaries to legal proceedings and publication histories. This form of inquiry, then, along with an investigation of the author's immediate network of association, provides an entry into the study of texts and their societal matrix. It is to assist in providing a forum for the critical study of the interplay between the original context of production and the ensuing tradition of reception.

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[16] See McGann's chapters "Keats and the Historical Method in Literary Criticism" and "The Monks ad the Giants: Textual and Bibliographical Studies and the Interpretation of Literary Works in *The Beauty of Inflections, op. cit.*, 15-89.

The fourth and next category of investigation concerns the relationship between an author's text and the larger corpus of his or her work or the corpus of other writers, what Bakhtin would term the relationship between a literary work and its literary environment:

> The literary work is an immediate part of the literary environment, the aggregate of all the socially active literary works of a given epoch and social group. From a strictly historical point of view the individual literary work is a dependent and therefore actually inseparable element of the literary environment. It occupies a definite place in this environment and is directly determined by its influences. It would be absurd to think that a work which occupies a place in the literary environment could avoid its direct influences or be an exception to its unity and regularity. (26)

Here, the quality of difference or similarity between a text and its textual predecessors is evaluated. In terms of form and content, individual works may be identified as a continuation of, differentiation from or synthesis of the techniques and concerns of other works. As such the historical placement and development of a single work may be assessed through investigation of its relative position vis-a-vis a larger corpus. At issue here is a reading of a single text against the examples of other texts. In those instances where the text continues in the tradition of a pre-established corpus, it is possible to study the individual microcosm, the novel, in terms of the larger macrocosm, the general school or movement. In the instances where a rupture with the received tradition is identifiable, interest is naturally turned to the ramifications of how and why the structural or thematic break is registered. The final and most interpretively complex instances are those where the features of a previous corpus are re-employed (or parodied) in a later text to form a synthesis of old and new techniques in the service of new intentions. In the latter two instances, where discernible change is effected, whether through disruption or incorporation, it is also possible to examine the historical place of a text in contradistinction to "minor" texts or related works from other forms of narrative. In this study we are examining works which have received foundational or even "canonic" status by a subsequent critical tradition. Nonetheless, a return to the context of any text's contemporary corpus, its literary environment, is a useful exercise in establishing the text's literary, historical and cultural setting.

The final and in a sense culminating category of the five areas central to an historically based study of the relationship of texts to their ideological horizon concerns the reading or interpretation of the literary form or structure of the text itself. One of the founding tenets of this study is that structural changes within literature--in particular, the novel form--are realized in response to conditions within each text's engendering historical environment. So stated, the necessary condition for demonstrating this hypothesis is the actual practice of examining the manipulation of novelistic structure according to identifiable historical and socio-cultural ends. The rationale for such an approach is, fundamentally, two-fold.

Pragmatically, and related to the limits of any historically based study, emphasis on historical changes to the novel form described in the previous chapter, provides a structure, a basis for the exercise of principles of inclusion and exclusion in circumscribing the topic. Above, and with principal reference to Bakhtin, the potential inclusiveness presumed in a socially and historically based study of the novel was indicated. Practically, the complex web of social, historical and ideological forces which inform literary creation can not be adequately accounted for. Some form of controlling structure is required with which to govern the strictures of so inclusive a project. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese has discussed both the importance and inevitability of relying on *structure* in any historically based study:

> ... at any given moment, systems of relations operate in relation to a dominate tendency--for example, what Marxists call a mode of production--that endows them with a structure. Both in the past and in the interpretation of the past history follows a pattern of structure, according to which some systems of relations and some events possess greater significance than others. Structure, in this sense, governs the writing and reading of texts. (218)

In this study, the novel form as broadly conceived in the previous chapter will provide the structure upon which to examine the relationship between the social and literary spheres. The aesthetic realm thus provides a kind of universal of form from which the vagaries of social and historical conditions upon specific novels may be discerned.

Secondly, and relatedly, such an approach is also based on the assumption that just as the content of work is derived from, and expressive of, an "ideological" position, so too the artistic structure, the particular manipulation of codes and conventions in a given text is derived from a socially based position. Indeed, through the constitution and manipulation of formal elements, literature effects a uniquely literary engagement with its ideological environment. Through literary form, extra-literary content becomes precisely a novel and not some other type of related narrative. Daniel Schwarz makes this essential point and, as this study will, turns it into an imperative of investigation:

> The form of the novel--style, structure, narrative techniques--expresses its value system. Put another way: form discovers the meaning of content. ... The work of fiction imitates a world that precedes the text, and critics should recapture that world

> primarily by formal analysis of the text, although knowledge of the historical context and author are often important. (58)

In conclusion, Schwarz's above point is important not simply as a dictate for the study of the novel but as a reminder of the fundamentally contingent nature of interpretation. This too recalls us to a realization of the fundamentally "textual" nature of this entire enterprise.

In the following chapters, specific novels will be analyzed on the basis of the principles outlined above. Working back from Bakhtin through Geertz to Berger and Luckman, each novel will be understood as the product of human signification, a specifically literary manner of creating and participating in social reality. Each novel will be analyzed with a view to discerning the manner in which it partakes of, and aids in the creation of, its socio-historic context. In the attempt to capture the socio-historic relevance of each novel, both for its own context and for its significance to our own, the above discussed critical categories of intentions, motivations, culture, the corpus and formal structure will be employed. The implementation of these principles will be in no way schematic; the above categories will function as contexts of approach to differing examples each with its own requirements and not as a rigid method. For here too, sensitivity to the specifics of each novel is required. The entire critical process (as with each of its components), from the originating novels through the relevant supporting documents to the very understanding and definition of a historical period, is based on a legacy of language, previous critical deliberation and the contexts of different forms of narrative each of which have to be manipulated in necessarily interpretive gestures. Added to this is the historical contingency which this enterprise affirms and upon which it is based, a contingency which disallows the primacy of either the past environment of artistic inception or the present context of critical evaluation in ascertaining interpretive validity. Indeed, the principles outlined above and to be utilized below are intended to insure critical awareness of both literature's and the critic's social and historical specificity. Given these conditions the three essays below will function precisely as *essais*, attempts to arrive at as full an understanding of the historical and social meaning of novels as possible. It is hoped that on the basis of the preceding attempt to create a socio-historic sense of literary awareness, discussion of individual novels will reveal aspects not only of the conditions of each novel's creation and reception but also principles of literature's complex relation to human culture in general.

Chapter 4

Representing Soviet-Russian Reality: Maxim Gorky's *Mother*

It has often been observed that literature in the Russian literary tradition of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has played a role in the configuration of its enveloping socio-political culture to a degree rarely seen in Western Europe. It is also observed that apart from isolated instances, the genre of the novel occupies a position of unparalleled preeminence in that literary tradition. Given these two broadly stated generalizations, Russian literature of the early twentieth-century would seem a felicitous point at which to begin a chronologically organized study of literature's representation of reality in the twentieth-century novel. Such an impression would be further strengthened in noting that the Russian novel form of the twentieth-century has been critically defined in organic development with its nineteenth-century realist predecessor, a novel form self defined in terms of its representation of reality. Further examination of the specific conditions of the twentieth-century novel within the prescriptive theoretical context of socialist realism, however, would betray this initial optimism. For the representational qualities of the novel form, while necessarily expressive of ideology, are nevertheless dependent upon conditions of unfettered possibility regarding the form and content of that expression. In this respect, the literary method of socialist realism and the specific example of Maxim Gorky's *Mother* (*Mat'*) offer to this study a negative example of the novel's connectedness to, and representation of, its cultural environment. It will be shown that the socialist realist novel's adherence to the atrophied *form* of the nineteenth-century realist novel in the absence of the ideological conditions which made the form possible--indeed which were replaced by the ideological requirements of a related though radically altered context--led not to the representation of reality but to the depiction of a prescribed vision of reality. In this instance, then, the novel of socialist realism will be shown to occupy the paradoxical role of affirming its necessary relationship to its social environment not by representing external reality in its processes of change and development but by being conscripted into the task of simultaneously depicting and creating the ideologically informed and politically enforced doxa which functioned as a surrogate reality.

The paradoxical nature by which the novel of socialist realism demonstrates literature's representation of reality and its relatedness to its external social and political environment deserves a further word of clarification given the complex history and critical use of *Mother*. Although the historical genesis of socialist realism and the publication of *Mother* will be discussed below, it ought to be observed here that the representative status of *Mother* for socialist realism was something developed after the fact of socialist realism's adoption as *the* method of Soviet literature. While Gorky wrote *Mother* with a definite personal leftist orientation, his novel did not respond to the conditions of an imposed *socialist realist* literary environment as did novels written after 1934. Indeed, the novelistic features of *Mother* were later used in the creation of a model for literary production. In this respect, *Mother* is exemplary of literature's representation of reality not simply as a product of a specific environment but also as the producer of that environment. It is also indicative of socialist realism's intentional return to historically previous forms of artistic production in the interests of promoting a specific ideological vision of social existence and the contradictions which are engendered by this strategy when coupled with the requirements of the novel form.

In generalized terms, the source of the contradictory role of the socialist realist novel with regards to its representational function is located in the requirements made of the novel by the socialist realist method: both to depict "what is" in the realist mode and that which "ought to be" in the revolutionary, utopian mode. Edward Mozejko has described this "vicious circle" of representation at the heart of the socialist realist novel:

> Es entsteht also ein eigenartiger circulus vitiosus: einerseits werden die Bedeutung der objektiven Wirklichkeit im literarischen Schaffensprozeß und die Notwendigkeit ihrer

> wahrheitsgetreuen Widerspiegelung betont, gleichzeitig jedoch wird ihre Rolle durch das unablässige Hervorheben des ideologischen Faktors bei der Beurteilung von Tatsachen, Ereignissen und Charakteren der im literarischen Werk dargestellten Wirklichkeit reduziert. Dieser Widerspruch wie wir sie soeben skizziert haben, sind vor allem darauf zurückzuführen, daß Theorie und Praxis des Sozialistischen Realismus auf zwei gegensätzlichen Thesen des Marxismus begründet sind. Gegensätzlich, da die eine den Traum einer glücklicken *Zukunft* postuliert (und dies ist eine ideologische These par excellence...); die andere These dagegen regt zur Widerspiegelung der Gegenwart an.[1]

An examination of the *familial* novelistic traits of time, place, plot, character and language in the specific example of Gorky's *Mother* will reveal this bi-part function to be the unique representational feature and function of the socialist realist novel. In particular, the exemplary qualities of *Mother* for the subsequently articulated method of socialist realism will be shown to find completion in a particular ideologically informed vision of history, the interpretation of which is enforced in the simultaneously social and literary principle of *partiinost'*.

Before turning to the specific example of *Mother*, however, attention is profitably turned to the socio-political context that provided what Bakhtin termed the ideological environment for both Gorky's novel and the subsequently formulated method of socialist realism. The Soviet commentators of official literary histories, in their efforts to legitimize the legislation of a specific artistic method, have concentrated efforts on the attempt to create a canon or critical heritage for this method. Socialist realism, from its inception until recent times, was shown to develop organically in a manner complementary to the revolutionary political movement in Russia as an expression of the unfolding of the objective laws and development of history.[2] Those western studies which have charted the tortuous development of soviet literature from 1917 until the disbanding of RAPP (the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers) in 1932 and the subsequent formulation of a socialist realist method have documented a far more complex process.[3] The intricacies of that development may be evinced immediately even in those approaches which emphasize changes intrinsic to the (autonomous) literary system, only the first of what Katerina Clark discusses as six potential areas of generative interaction between Soviet literature and its socio-cultural environment:

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[1] Edward Mozejko, *Der sozialistische Realismus: Theorie, Entwicklung und Versagen einer Literaturmethode*, (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag Herbert Grundmann, 1977): 38. See also Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), 37 for a succinct expression of this oft noted contradiction.

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[2] See Clark, *ibid.*, 28 for a review of this tendency in Soviet scholarship as well as, B.A. Bjalik, "Razvitiye traditsii russkoj klassicheckoj literatury v tvorchestve M. Gor'kogo," 5-99 and L. Timofeev, "K voprosu o Gor'kovskikh traditsijakh v russkoj sovetskoj literature," 216-53 in *Tvorchestvo M. Gor'kogo i voprosy sotsialisticheskogo realizma*, (Moskva: 1958) for representative examples of the same critical process applied to the specific example of Gorky.

[3] See among others Edward Mozejko, *Der sozialistische Realismus. Theorie, Entwicklung und Versagen einer Literaturmethode*, (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag Herbert Grundmann, 1977), H. Borland, *Soviet Literary Theory and Practice during the First Five-Year Plan 1928-32*, (New York: Greenwood Press, [1950] 1969), H. Ermolaev, *Soviet Literary Theories 1917-1934: The Genesis of Socialist Realism*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963) and C.V. James, *Soviet Socialist Realism: Origins and Theory*, (London: MacMillan, 1973).

> There are at least six major elements in Soviet society and culture that play a part in the generative process of literature. First there is literature itself; second, there is Marxism-Leninism; third, there are the Russian radical intelligentsia's traditional myths and hero images, which the Bolsheviks brought with them when they took power in Russia in 1917; fourth, there are the various nonliterary forums through which the official viewpoint is disseminated (the press, the political platforms, theoretical writings, official histories, and the like), ... fifth come political events and policies; and, sixth, there are the individual persons who are the principal actors in these political events together with their roles and values. (8)

In the context of Soviet-Russian literature of the 20s and 30s then, the terrain of potential contact between literature and social reality is vast and needs, in the interests of this study's emphasis on representation, to be reduced to that area which influenced the constitution of a particular form for the novel's representation of Soviet reality.

Régine Robin in a recent study has provided a useful conceptual framework with which to establish a specifically literary context for approaching the field of literature's inter-relations with the socio-political environment of Russian culture at the turn of the century. Using the concept of a "discursive complex," Robin has delineated the central cultural paradigm of the period from the entire matrix of contrasting and at times conflicting ideological positions across a continuum of scientific and cultural forms of expression.[4] This predominant cultural paradigm was realist in character and provided Russian literary culture with a generalized prescription for the correct form and function of literature throughout the nineteenth-century and into the twentieth. The art of the realist cultural paradigm was to be imitative, typical, representational of social reality and so formulated as to emphasize content over form.[5] The cluster of central tenets of the realist mode of writing originated in Belinsky and the "progressive" or "radical" critics subsequently enshrined along with Belinsky in the Soviet critical canon of forerunners to socialist realism: Dobroliubov, Pisarev and Cherneshevsky. The great realist writers of the mid to late nineteenth-century--Turgenev, Dostoevsky and Tolstoy--although variant in expression also practiced a realist core of prescriptive tenets in their novels and critical commentaries. This same central paradigm, though with an intensifying ideological interpretation and prescription, was later consolidated by a subsequent tradition of Marxist critics beginning with Plekhanov and extended into the post-revolutionary period of Marxist criticism's ascendency to be solidified into the politically subservient and endorsed method of socialist realism in 1934.[6]

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[4] See Régine Robin, *Socialist Realism: An Impossible Aesthetic*, tran. C. Porter, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), particularly chapter 4 "The Discursive Base of Realism in Russia," chapter 5 "The Course of Criticism" 81-110 and chapter 7 "Displacements and Repetitions: The Discursive Pedestal of Realism Consolidated" 149-62.

[5] See Robin *ibid.*, 84.

In admittedly broad strokes, then, it is not difficult to trace socialist realism's heritage in the dominant realist aesthetic of the Russian nineteenth-century and the political atmosphere of the revolutionary period. The extent to which the method of socialist realism is in any way a "natural" development and culmination of the realist aesthetic or rather an aberration is an interpretive question more difficult to ascertain. An examination of the representational features of Gorky's *Mother*, placed as it is at an historical transition point between the realist aesthetic of the nineteenth-century and as an "official" founding text of socialist realism, should provide insight into arriving at an interpretation of this localized, cultural question as well indicating an example of the generalized representational qualities of the novel form. Before turning to the specific example of *Mother*, however, it will be necessary to provide an outline of the particular aesthetic of the socialist realist method in this way to indicate in general terms the context Gorky's novel helped to create.

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[6] For a generalized overview of the literary and critical expression of the period of this realist discursive paradigm, though with greater nuance see Richard Freeborn, "The nineteenth century: the age of realism, 1855-60," Julian Connolly, "The nineteenth century: between realism and modernism, 1880-95," Evelyn Bristol, "Turn of a century: modernism, 1895-1925," and Victor Terras, The twentieth century: the era of socialist realism, 1925-53," in *The Cambridge History of Russian Literature*, ed. C.A. Moser, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989): 248-519.

1. The Socialist Realist Representation of Reality:

The central tenets of socialist realism were formulated and publicized in the period extending in the wake of RAPP's dissolution in April 1932 and the announcement of socialist realism as *the* method of soviet literature at the First All-Union congress of Soviet Writers in 1934. The term socialist realism was probably first used in a public forum by Ivan Gronsky, editor of *Izvestiya* and chairman of the Organizing committee of the Union of Soviet Writers, in the *Literaturnaya Gazeta* of May 23, 1932: "The basic demand that we make on the writer is: write the truth, portray truthfully our reality that is in itself dialectic. Therefore the basic method of Soviet literture is the method of socialist realism."[7] Formulated hard on the heels of RAPP's demise, socialist realism was meant as the party's obedient replacement of, rather than an outright repudiation of, RAPP's aesthetic principles. The formation of the Union of Soviet Writers, with its administrative core of Party ideologues, and the method of socialist realism were a conscious initiative by the Party to appropriate the ideologically formulating power of literature. In this sense, the formation of socialist realism represents not so much a break with the preceding literary context of the Soviet Union (RAPP itself had risen to prominence since 1928 with the imprimatur of the Party) but the solidification of ideological control over that context.[8] Indeed given the overriding importance of ideological control, the following discussion of socialist realism on the basis of the five central principles of *narodnost'*, positive hero, revolutionary romanticism, *tipichnost'* and *partiinost'* should not be seen as constituting the unchanging components of a monolithic theory. As befits a method formulated to serve the ideological requirements of the Party, socialist realism modified in expression and nuances of definition on the basis of changes to the extra-literary, ideological requirements made of it.[9] Regardless of the particular requirements of a changing ideological climate, the five components to be discussed below may be shown to have functioned more or less continuously and harmoniously according to the logic they establish within the ideologically committed and governed doctrine of socialist realism.

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[7] Ivan Gronsky, "Obespechim vse uslovia tvorcheskoy raboty literaturnykh kruzhkov," *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, May 23, 1932. Quoted in Ermolaev, *op. cit.*, 144.

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[8] See especially M.A. Bullitt, "Towards a Marxist Theory of Aesthetics: The Development of Socialist Realism in the Soviet Union," *The Russian Review* 35.1 (1976): 53-76, for an expression of this view: "The single most important extra-artistic influence upon the course and outcome of the literary debate of the 1920s was the Communist party," 71.

[9] The following discussion is based on the following core of secondary studies of socialist realism: E. Mojejko, *op. cit.*, H. Borland, *op. cit.*, M.A. Bullitt, *op cit.*, K. Clark, *op. cit.*, H. Ermolaev, *op. cit.*, C.V. James, *op. cit.*, R. Mathewson, *The Positive Hero in Russian Literature*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1958), G.S. Morson, "Socialist Realism and Literary Theory," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 38.2 (1979): 121-34, A. Ovcharenko, *Socialist Realism and the Modern Literary Process*, trans. unknown, (Moscow: Progress, 1978), R. Porter, "Soviet Perspectives on Socialist Realism," in *European Socialist Realism*, eds. M. Scriven and D. Tate, (Oxford: Berg, 1988): 49-59., R. Robin, *op. cit.*, J.P. Scanlan, "The Understanding of Socialist Realism in Contemporary Soviet Aesthetics," in *American Contributions to the Ninth Congress of Slavists*, (Columbus: Slavica, 1983), E.M. Swiderski, *The Philosophical Foundations of Soviet Aesthetics*, (London: D. Reidel, 1979), A. Tertz (A. Sinyavsky) *On Socialist Realism*, (New York: Pantheon, 1960).

Narodnost' is the tenet which emphasizes the specific content and composition of socialist-realist art; it is therefore, "the meeting point of artistic quality, ideological content and social function."[10] This principle applies to the quality of art which gives it significance to mankind. Best described as "peopleness," art with the quality of *narodnost'* is art for the people and is, in this sense, considered "popular" or "populist" art. The concept of *narodnost'* has a long tradition in the history of Russian letters as expressed in the writings of such thinkers as V. Belinsky, N. Dobroliubov and N. Cherneshevsky.[11] Belinsky, for instance, in "The Acts of Peter the Great, Wise Transformer of Russia" distinguishes between *nacional'nost* and *narodnost'* ultimately to emphasize *nacional'nost* as the concept which incorporates the narrower term *narodnost'* to characterize the past, present and future identity of a people.[12] As a concept with literary applications, Belinsky related *narodnost'* to his understanding of realism in literature: "...if the representation of life is *truthful*, then it is *popular*."[13]

Soviet literary criticism, in the formation of socialist realism, adopted this nineteenth-century concept and added elements derived from Marxist theory, particularly the idea of *klassnost'* as previously developed by the theorists of proletarian literature whereby the form and content of literary production were determined by the class position of the author. According to the formalized, Marxist understanding of *narodnost'* and socialist realism, two major forms of art have developed out of the division of society into classes. Folk or popular art developed among the masses of humans in the proletarian classes, while the oppressing classes developed an individualistic form of art accessible only to the elite. Each class established a mutually exclusive tradition. With the coming of socialism and the attack on previously privileged social classes, *narodnost'* found renewed application and utility as the quality of art most suitable to the proletarian dictatorship. In contrast, bourgeois, individualistic art was borne out of a cultural separation from the folk traditions of the people. In socialist societies, art incorporates the best aspects of the folk tradition and fuses them with the new realities of twentieth-century life in a society based on the cultural aspirations of the working classes. Socialist realist art containing the necessary quality of *narodnost'* is rooted in the "people," accessible to the people and expressive of the people. Theoretically, this convergence represents the true socialist realist art of socialist society, in continuation of the natural development of folk art. In further refinements, *narodnost'* is directly linked to the all important concept to be discussed more fully below, *partiinost'*. As produced according to the method of socialist realism, literature is "necessarily" a fusion of the aesthetically expressed interests of the people and the will of the Party, the guarantor of the people's concerns. The inclusion of *narodnost'* in literature is an expression of the people and, by extension, the Party, the representatives of the people's will. As M.B. Khrapchenko put it: "It ought justifiably to be acknowledged, the thought that communist *partiinost'* is the highest form of *narodnost'*."[14]

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[10] C.V. James, *ibid.*, 3.

[11] See E. Mozejko, *op. cit.*, 92-96 for an overview of the historical development and use of the concept *narodnost'* from its nineteenth-century origins to its adaptations in socialist realism.

[12] V.G. Belinsky, *Izbrannye Filosofskie Sochineniya*, eds. M.T. Iobchyka and Z.V. Smirnovo, Volume 1 (Moskva: Gos. Izd. Pol. Lit., 1948): 339.

[13] V. Belinsky, "O Russkoi Povesti i Povestiakh Gogolia," *ibid.*, 202.

A precept related to the principles of *narodnost'* and *partiinost'* is that of the positive hero. Gorky's celebration of the folkloric in the history and evolution of world literature signals a return to the kind of socially motivated hero allegedly found in folklore.[15] The socialist process of the abolishment of class distinctions heralded the restoration of the relationship between man and labour and the re-appearance of the positive heroes of past folk culture once again confident in, and expressive of, the immortality of the labouring class. As a component of literary culture, the positive hero of socialist realism has ancestry in such a figure of the "new men" as Rakhmetov from Chernyshevsky's *What is to be Done?* and is seen as the necessary opposite to the "superfluous men" of an alienated feudal and bourgeois culture. As manifested in Soviet literature, the positive hero elevates the world as it *is* to as it *should* be. His actions, tempered by unswerving devotion to the Party and its philosophy make him a natural leader capable of inspiring the masses, for whom he struggles, into a shining future. Thus, the heroic qualities of the positive hero are rendered entirely functional as socialist realism demands of its literature a positive example of revolutionary consciousness and, relatedly, of adherence to the Party and its ideology.

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[14] M.B. Khrapchenko, *Tvorcheskaya Individual'nost' Pisatelya i Razvitie Literatury*, (Moskva: Sovetskii Pisatel', 1970): 186.

[15] K. Clark, *op. cit.*, in discussing the Soviet re-vitalization of folk elements in literature (primarily as a means of legitimizing the Stalinist dictatorship 148-50) also draws attention to important parallels with religious genres of the Russian cultural tradition.

The functionality of the positive hero in relation to the needs of the Party is further related to the concept of *historicity*. Here the positive hero of individual works was expected to embody the ideals and social needs of the community as determined by the Party and its conception of the historical moment. Thus Pavel, of *Mother*, an organizer of an underground movement in preparation for the historical moment of a mass uprising within pre-revolutionary society, is responsive to the historical needs of pre-socialist society. In later years, during the thirties for instance, the hero would be a collective farm worker battling reactionary *kulaks*, while during the war years he would defend the socialist motherland. The positive hero, then, is intended in socialist realism to provide not simply a positive example and to incarnate the positive ideals of the author and his or her work, but also to reflect the historical state of social development as determined by the Party.

This mixture of the functional and the heroic is indicative of a third, more controversial precept of socialist realism--that of revolutionary (variously called socialist or Red) romanticism. Once again, this concept is founded on a representation of reality and social life not as it *is* but as it *should* be; hence the perceived incompatibility with the verisimilitudinous representation of objective reality which lies at the basis of the realist mode of writing.[16] A concept particularly promoted by Gorky, revolutionary romanticism was intended as a means of ensuring the representation of positive aspects of Soviet life ultimately to lead to the transformation of Soviet reality. The inclusion of revolutionary romanticism as a tenet of socialist realism promoted literature which was not simply depictive of reality but openly creative of the new socialist world in its processes of "revolutionary development." Although revolutionary romanticism was used consciously to romanticize and aggrandize depictions of Soviet reality, it was not understood as incompatible with *socialist* realism since it represented an "anticipation" of future life as it undoubtedly would be. As indicative of the imaginative anticipation of life as it was destined to be, due to the historical development of socialist society, revolutionary romanticism was philosophically linked with, and held to be expressive of, the materialist philosophy of Marxism-Leninism. The prophetic quality of revolutionary romanticism, regardless of its anti-realist implications was valued as a simultaneously visionary and didactic component of socialist realism.

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[16] See H. Ermolaev, *op. cit.*, 156-58 for a discussion of the conflict engendered between RAPP and the Party on the basis of the place of revolutionary romanticism in socialist realism.

Often placed in contradiction to the less than realistic ideals of the positive hero and revolutionary romanticism was the precept of *tipichnost'* or typicality. This concept, as with *narodnost'*, is found in Russian criticism of the nineteenth-century and received authoritative formulation by Belinsky who felt that an author's ability to represent the typical in literature was an important indicator of the author's talent.[17] Later Soviet workings of typicality were based on Engel's definition of realism as an "accurate portrayal of typical characters under typical circumstances," and represent an attempt to generalize facets of reality, reducing them to components suitable for artistic presentation.[18] Typicality was desired as a means of representing the essence of a socio-historical context or phenomenon in keeping with Marxist-Leninist thought. For in the context of socialist realism's doctrinal adherence to Marxist-Leninist ideology, the representation of the typical was *de facto* the representation of what should be typical to the given socio-historic context. In effect the realist guise of typicality was used to present reality not as it was but as it ought to be.

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[17] V. Belinsky, "O Russkoi Povesti i Povestiakh Gogolia," *op. cit.* "One of the most distinctive signs of creative originality or, to express it better, of the creation itself consists in this *typicality* which is, if one may express oneself so, the heraldic stamp of the author. With a true talent, every face is a type and every type, for the reader, is a *familiar stranger*" (202).

[18] Friedrich Engels, "Brief an Miss Harkness," in *Marxismus und Literature. Eine Dokumentation in drei Bänden*, ed. Fritz J. Raddatz, (Reinbeck bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 1969): 157-59. "Realismus

Each of the above precepts of socialist realism, then, suggests the use of the aesthetic form of realism to represent objective reality according to a Marxist-Leninist interpretation of it. Effectively, it is not the objective depiction of reality which is at stake in socialist realism, but the use of realist conventions of representation in the creation of reality as it ought to be. Self evident in this all important prescriptive function is adherence to a specific vision of social development which is governed not simply by ideology but, more importantly, the Communist Party, the formulator and arbiter of ideology. With the above four precepts, socialist realist art becomes the expression and exemplification of the progressive aspirations of a monolithic, conceptually abstract class. And with the inclusion of the fifth and final principle, socialist realism finds its ultimate function in the strengthening and

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bedeutet, meines Erachtens, außer der treue des Details die getreue Wiedergabe typischer charaktere unter typischen Umständen" (157).

legitimizing of Party authority in the interpretation of Marxist-Leninist philosophy as the source of objective truth and knowledge concerning life and art.

Partiinost', or partymindedness, is the fundamental principle of socialist realism; it is the principle from whence the other precepts obtain their defining characteristics, giving socialist realist art its "socialist" function--that of serving the Communist Party in the name of the communist masses. The idea of *partiinost'* is derived from Lenin's adaptation of Engels' concept of *tendentiousness*. Engels used the term tendentiousness to describe artistic identification with a particular social or political cause. Lenin extended the concept by incorporating the idea of artistic allegiance to a particular party, thus consciously emphasizing the utilitarian function of literature. Linked to a specific party ideology, art moved beyond simple identification with a cause to an active attempt to redress the issues at the source of the perceived problem. Art would become a weapon of propaganda to fight in the service of the proletariat, thus fulfilling Marx's prescription from his eleventh thesis on Feuerbach for philosophers to change rather than simply interpret the world.

Lenin provided the concept with its definitive formulation in Gorky's journal *Novaya Zhizn*, in an article entitled "Party Organisation and Party Literature" of 1905. Although this article has been the subject of much debate, effectively, socialist realism derives its cohesive, driving force from this single article on the Party and literature. The political strength of the Party takes complete precedence over aesthetic matters; these considerations were evaluated, *ex post facto*, after the ideological requirements had been fulfilled. As a result, socialist realism demanded that art serve an ideological function as prescribed by the Party. That function was to further the interests of the masses; art must educate them in the evolutionary processes of history, to show them their role in those processes. Furthermore, these functions and lessons were placed within and shown to emanate from the context of the political concerns of the Communist Party. Thus, with the inclusion of *partiinost'*, the doctrine of socialist realism closes in on its beginnings to become an unending circle of function and effect, with the whole utilitarian process driven by the Communist Party, the mediator of Marxist-Leninist philosophy, the proposed standard of objective reality in the Soviet Union. And just as *partiinost'* became the primary principle in the doctrine of socialist realism, a historically contemporaneous novel, Gorky's *Mother*, became the founding text of this method for expectedly similar ideological reasons.

2. *Mother* and the Novel's Representation of Ideology:

It is a curious and no doubt significant fact that the canonic text of a literary method formulated in the early 1930s was written in a socio-cultural context far removed--socially, temporally and spatially--from the Stalinist Soviet Union.[19] Gorky's *Mother*, although conceived in the period immediately before the Russian revolution of 1905, was written hastily in its wake. Gorky had fled Russia to the United States in early 1906 in the hopes of raising funds for the Russian opposition parties. Rejected by a prudish American populace as a result of the machinations of the Russian embassy, Gorky took the opportunity to begin his novel between June and October of 1906 in the United States and to complete it in Italy between October and December of the same year.[20] Upon publication, first in English in New York, then in Russian in Berlin and finally, though censured, in Russian in Russia, Gorky's novel was criticized from across the spectrum of the Russian intelligentsia. Alexander Blok, in an article entitled "On Realists," stated that in *Mother* there was "neither one new thought nor one clear line," while Plekhanov went so far as to speak of the "end of Gorky."[21] Gorky himself at various times and with various correspondents expressed doubts about the artistic merit of his novel.[22] *Mother* was well received however by Lenin who had read the novel in manuscript form and who told Gorky in May 1907 that it was a "very timely book," that "many workers participated in the revolutionary movement unconsciously, instinctively and now they will read *Mother* with great benefit to themselves."[23] Embedded within Lenin's estimation of *Mother*, the recognition of its didactic worth in transforming the consciousness of workers through a depiction of the revolutionary movement as it should be, is the source of the novel's later representative stature as a founding text of socialist realism. The following discussion of *Mother's* unique configuration of the novelistic elements of time, place, plot, character and language will reveal the formulation of socialist realism's bi-part aesthetic, the representation of what is and what ought to be and confirm Gorky's *Mother* as a representative novel of the socio-cultural context depicted in and created by the subsequent tradition of socialist realist literature.

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[19] The following textual information is derived primarily from M. Gorky, *Polnoye sobraniye sochineniy*, Vol. VIII (Moskva: Nauka, 1970) and R. Freeborn, *The Russian Revolutionary Novel*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

[20] For an account of Gorky's blundered trip to the United States see Richard Hare, *Maxim Gorky, Romantic Realist and Conservative Revolutionary*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1962).

[21] Gorky, *op. cit.*, 490-92.

The events of Gorky's *Mother* take place in a spectrum of temporal development which is unlike that of a realist novel. The novel's representation of time is based on an abstract conception of human existence in time rather than on human engagement with a reality which is characterized by the inclusivity of fluid temporal change and development. The realist depiction of time is subordinated to the representation of an idealized conception of time, in particular an ideologically informed conception of history which assumes the inevitable ascendancy of the working class. In this sense *Mother* does not take place out of time, but instead in the unchanging temporal space of epic time where ideal values have fixed time in a category which is total and sacrosanct and thereby neither fluid nor inconclusive. Time, thus, does not indicate and introduce to the narrative changing, conflicting social, existential and economic forces in realist specificity as causal agents of transformation and development. A specific representation of time is used, however, to represent the "timeless truth" of a particular vision of history which has been localized in selected characters.

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[22] Hare, for instance, documents Gorky's comment to F. Gladkov: "*Mother* is really a bad book, written in a state of excitable irritation" *op. cit.*, 73.

[23] M. Gorky, *op. cit.*, 479.

The novel begins with time in the form of a representation of temporal duration in human life which emphasizes the quantitative change though qualitative uniformity that time brings. The lives of the workers in the settlement which constitutes the setting of the novel are shown to live a blighted, thwarted life dominated day by day, week by week by the factory, the temporal organizer and primary indicant of their working-class lives. In confirmation of Marx's axiom that the mode of production of material life conditions the social processes of human life, the workers of *Mother* literally live according to the schedule and conditions established by factory life:[24]

> Every day the factory whistle shrieked tremulously in the grimy, greasy air above the worker's settlement. ... In the evening, when the setting sun found weary reflection in the windows of the houses, the factory expelled the people from its stone bowels as though they were so much slag.... The day had been devoured by the factory, whose machines sucked up as much of the workers' strength as they needed. ... People were born with this malady of the spirit inherited from their fathers, and like a dark shadow it accompanied them to the very grave, making them do things revolting in their senseless cruelty. ... Life had always been like that. It flowed on in a turbid stream, slowly and evenly, year after year, and everything was bound together by deep-rooted habits of thinking and doing the same thing day after day. ... After some fifty years of such a life a man died.[25]

Such is the life of the central character's father and such seems to be the life destined to his son Pavel. But rather than submit himself to the unchanging cycle of work, despair and cruelty, Pavel undertakes to educate himself into an understanding of the causes of such a life. He endeavours to become a responsible agent consciously determining his personal, social and ultimately class development. Henceforth, changes in time within the novel are understood in terms of progression and development in an ideological sense and are revealed through the positive alterations in the personalities of Pavel and his mother as they come to a progressively clearer understanding of their historical role as members of an oppressed working class. In Pavel these changes are expressed in physical alterations observed by the Mother and brought about in the wake of his Party activities:

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[24] See R. Mathewson, *op. cit.*, 148 for a discussion of the influence of some of the fundamental Marxist conceptions of human nature and development on Soviet literature.

[25] M. Gorky, *Mat'*, in *Polnoye sobraniye sochineniy*, Vol VIII, (Moskva: Nauka, 1970): 7-10. The above translation and all other citations, unless otherwise indicated, are from M. Gorky, *Mother*, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1976): 15-18.

> Many new details of his behaviour drew her attention: he stopped dressing foppishly and began to give more care to the cleanliness of his body and clothing. His movements became freer, his manners simpler and less gruff. (24)

In the mother herself, the passing of time is revealed in relation to her increasing awareness of herself as an individual and member of a historically self-conscious working-class and in her growing ability to articulate herself as a result of this awareness.

The replacement of time as a causal agent in the change and growth of the characters with history as an ideological concept is so complete in *Mother* as to require external narrative techniques with which to maintain the realist conventions of temporal development. To preserve the realist facade of temporal chronology in the lives of the characters of *Mother*, the narrator indicates temporal progression from a privileged position of omniscience. Thus, for example, the following beginnings of the chapters indicate changes in time which seem extrinsic to the verisimilitudinous development of the events of the plot:

> The days slipped past one another, like the beads of a rosary, building the weeks and the months. ...

> The gendarmes put in their appearance almost a month after that alarming night. ... The following day it became known that they had arrested Bukin, Somoilov, Somov and five others as well. ... The next day and another sleepless night dragged out, but even more slowly passed the following day. ... That evening while she was having tea she heard hoofs squashing through the mud outside,, and then a familiar voice. ... The next day, when Pelagea came to the gates of the factory.... That evening when the khokhol had gone out.... (pp. 42, 57, 64, 82, 98, 104 and 107)

The realist requirement of a believable chronology to human events is conserved via primitive narrative technique rather than the organic development of plot.

As with the representation of temporal development, the delineation of place in *Mother* is based on a foundation which is at once realist and yet simultaneously abstract. The central locale of the novel is a worker's settlement in the immediate vicinity of a factory. This factory, as indicated above, is shown to have a determining influence on the personal and social lives of the workers:

> Every day the factory whistle shrieked tremulously in the grimy, greasy air above the workers' settlement. And in obedience to its summons sullen people, roused before sleep had refreshed their muscles, came scuttling out of their little grey houses like frightened cockroaches. They walked through the cold darkness, down the unpaved street to the high stone cells of the factory, which awaited them with cold complacency, its dozens of square oily eyes lighting up the road. The mud smacked beneath their feet. They shouted in hoarse sleepy voices and rent the air with ugly oaths, while other sounds came floating to meet them: the heavy hum of machinery and the hiss of steam. Tall black smokestacks, stern and gloomy, loomed like thick clubs above the settlement. (15)

Characters are shown to interact causally with the environment they inhabit, as in the chapter length, exemplary account of the brutal life and death of Pavel's father. Thus the factory setting is established in varying degrees of specificity according to its effect on the community, from a generalized overview of the working class, through the specific example of Pavel's father and then to Pavel himself. Once the malignity of the factory has been established as the norm against which Pavel's personal transformation and revolutionary activity is to derive its positive meaning, the factory ceases to acquire any specificity. The narrative never enters the factory; the factory is never described in terms of size, function or ownership nor is its location within Russia ever determined. Without ever becoming a particular factory in realist specificity, the factory of *Mother* becomes all factories in the interests of an ideologically informed theme concerning the implacable struggle between workers and employees in capitalist society.

The plot of Gorky's *Mother* is based on the actual events of the 1902 May Day demonstration in Sormovo, a settlement in the environs of Gorky's home city of Nizhny Novgorod. The characters of the novel are based on Pyotr Zalomov, a leader of the demonstration and central defendant in the subsequent trial, and his mother Anna Kirillovna Zalomova, a woman known to Gorky as a boy. In the trial, exile and eventual escape of Pyotr, Gorky played a significant role providing both intellectual and material support to the defendants.[26] To this extent the subject of the novel is derived from actual historical events. As in the fictional configuration of time and space, however, the realist foundation of the plot is subordinated to a fictionalized rendering of Bolshevik ideology concerning the class struggle and its place in history. Katerina Clark, in distinguishing the structural elements of the master plot of the socialist realist novel, indicates the centrality of the Marxist-Leninist spontaneity/consciousness dialectic.[27] This dialectic effects the progressive increase in political awareness on the part of the working classes concerning their class position and historical role and is actualized in an interplay between spontaneously expressed dissatisfaction with their material lives and conscious understanding of the ideological roots or causes of the conditions of their lives. The characters, of *Mother* and especially Pavel and his mother, illustrate in a fictional format the transformations of individuals as they move from spontaneously felt disquiet to cognisance of their historical role as members of an ascendant working class.

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[26] For the relevant information concerning Gorky's knowledge of and involvement in these events see M. Gorky *op. cit.*, 462-77.

[27] K. Clark, *op. cit.*, 15-17.

Thus, rather than aspiring to a representation of the new and incomplete within human experience, the plot of *Mother* sets as its task the presentation of a specific ideologically formulated conception of the historical development of working-class consciousness as it is typified in two central characters. In this respect, Gorky's plot does not involve an exchange with, or representation of, the ethical and epistemological systems which form the reality at the source of his plot--Samovo, 1902. Rather it effects a synthesis in artistic form of Bolshevik ideology. *Mother* takes its ethical and epistemological content not from life, but from a pre-formulated, metacritical ideological system and thus reverses the process of literature's use of social reality described by Bakhtin:

> Literature does not ordinarily take its ethical and epistemological content from ethical and epistemological systems, or from outmoded ideological systems (as classicism did), but immediately from the very process of the generation of ethics, epistemology, and other ideologies.[28]

Given the pre-established intent of the plot, after a period of "dialectic" advances and reversals in the fortunes of the revolutionary cell depicted, Pavel delivers the final "message" of the novel in the form of a political speech emphasizing the ideological identification, principles and aims of his group:

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[28] M.M. Bakhtin and P.M. Medvedev, *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship*, tran. A.J. Wehrle, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985): 17.

> 'We are Socialists. That means we are against private property, an institution which disintegrates society, sets people against one another, creates an irreconcilable hostility of interests, resorts to falsehood in the effort to conceal or justify this hostility, and corrupts all people with lies, hypocrisy and hatred. We hold that a society which looks upon the individual as nothing but a means of making others rich is inhuman and hostile to our interests. We cannot accept its false and hypocritical system of morality. We denounce the cynicism and cruelty of its attitude towards the individual. We want to fight and will fight against all the forms of physical and moral slavery enforced on the individual by such a society, against all means of crushing human beings in the interests of selfish greed. We are workers, people by whose labour all things are made, from children's toys to massive machines; yet we are people deprived of the right to defend our human dignity. Anyone is able to exploit us for his own personal ends. At present we want to achieve a degree of freedom which will eventually enable us to take all power into our own hands. Our slogans are simple enough: "Down with private property!" "All means of production in the hands of the people!" "All power in the hands of the people!" "No one exempt from work!" You can see from this that we are not mere rebels!' (350)

With this concluding synthesis, the plot of *Mother* effectively ends as it is no longer required as a vehicle for the representation of Bolshevik ideology.

The specific quality of the plot of *Mother* with regard to its ideological intent and formalized structure necessarily has implications for, and parallels with, characterization in the novel. Characterization maintained a prominent place in the tradition of socialist realist poetics of the novel established in the historical wake of *Mother*. In accordance with principle of typicity emphasized by Engels as the central convention of realist fiction, the heroes of the socialist realist novel functioned as specific vehicles for the conveyance of larger truths concerning social life in given socio-historical contexts.[29] Such heroes, beginning with Pavel of *Mother*, represented qualitatively "new" men--successors to the thwarted Bazarov of Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons* and Chernishevsky's Rakhmetov of *What Is To Be Done?* themselves figures who exemplified a mid-century change from the superfluous heroes of Pushkin, Lermonotov and Goncharov.[30] Besides functioning as a successor, Pavel, in a later tradition of Soviet criticism, was identified as the progenitor of the still newer men in the fiction of such writers as Gladkov, Fadeev and Ostrovsky.[31]

The characters of Gorky's *Mother* are types resonant in the literary and social history of nineteenth-century Russia. They are types, however, who, as Katerina Clark observes in her account of the hero of socialist realist fiction, have been so depersonalized as to become essentially iconic; they have no *individual* specificity.[32] Although based on historical personages, Gorky's figures find their fullest expression as characters not as individual human beings with a unique history of development but as models of virtue in the legitimation of Party authority and the Party's vision of history. Divorced from causal contact with their human environments, the central characters of *Mother* develop and find their individuality in the representation and expression of a totalizing ideology imposed whole upon their lives and not as it emanates organically from their social life. In this respect, the characterization of *Mother* resembles epic characterization. The characters function as agents typical of an enclosed world-view rather than as individuals in contact with an evolving, socially formulated world.

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[29] As an example of this axiomatic principle in Soviet criticism, see B. Byrsov, "*Mat'* Gor'kogo kak tip romana sotsialisticheskogo realizma," in B. Byrsov, *Roman M. Gor'kogo Mat' i voprosy sotsialisticheskogo realizma*, (Moskva, 1955): 115-218: "Soviet literature represents that kind of hero and society which the history of humanity has never known. It's central purpose is to tell the truth about that hero and that society."

[30] See B. Byrsov, *ibid.*, 128 and 151 as well as R. Freeborn, *op. cit.*, and R. Mathewson, *op. cit.*

[31] K. Clark, *op. cit.*, 28 and 52 indicates the prevalence of this view in Soviet criticism.

[32] K. Clark, *ibid.*, 47.

Formally, then, the characters of *Mother* have epic attributes. In thematic terms, they approximate the literature of the Old Russian tradition of recounting the virtuous life of an individual or, in particularly Christian settings, of hagiography.[33] Pavel in particular has the one-dimensional quality of hagiography; the narrative is never allowed a glimpse of his interior life. The adjectives used to describe his external appearance--his serious and stern (ser'yozny i strogii) voice and his brightly (svetlo) shining eyes--remain the same throughout the narrative. The only glimpse accorded his coldly ascetic personality is gained via the witness of his activities, his unflinching submission of everything (even romantic involvement) in his life to the needs of the revolutionary cause.

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[33] K. Clark, *ibid.*, R. Freeborn, *op. cit.* and I. Weil, *Gorky: His Literary Development and Influence on Soviet Intellectual Life*, (New York: Random House, 1966): 54-55 emphasize these obvious parallels.

In contrast to Pavel, the mother, Pelagea Nilovna, does have a life of interiority which is represented in the text. Although Pelagea Nilovna is identified primarily as *the* mother (with all of the associations of unconditional love and familial bonding accorded that title), she gradually evolves into the role of revolutionary in her own right with the accompanying "privilege" of martyrdom, the final event depicted in the novel. Indeed, through the mother, Gorky is able to represent the evolution of the oppressed classes from instinctual, spontaneous dissatisfaction to revolutionary consciousness in a character with intrinsic universalizing qualities. Gorky's narrative shifts perspective from the innocence of the mother to the omniscience of the narrator. Together, these perspectives affirm both the experiential inevitability and theoretical truth of the central ideological message of the novel.

The remaining characters of the novel function as little more than the barest of types formulated to flesh out a fuller representation of Bolshevik ideology. Andrey Nakhodka, the Ukranian, for instance, proclaims the ideals of a communist international which is essentially a Marxist reworking of the Christian ideals of equality and brotherhood. Rybin represents the dangerous, anarchic perils of an instinctually discontented peasantry when unguided into revolutionary consciousness by the example of the proletariat and Party. Most of these characters, significantly, are literally without a family until they are united by Pavel and the mother into the larger family, a revolutionary movement paternally presided over by the Party.

Just as the characters of *Mother* function without individualized experience, solely as types in the service of a unified ideological meaning, so too the language of *Mother* is homogenized in the service of an ideology and not employed in the realistic representation of a socio-cultural context in its variant diversity. *Mother* incorporates what Bakhtin describes as a "ptolemaic" conception of language whereby the language of representation excludes the incursion of alternate languages, alternate ideologies and forms of human experience.[34] As with plot and characterization, the language employed strengthens the homogeneity of the ideological message presented. Thus, although the mother and Pavel speak the differing registers appropriate to the instinctually prepared student and to the conscious teacher, they nonetheless speak the same language of Bolshevik ideology. This ideology is never challenged by the language of a competing ideology or even by concrete application of its meaning on even its own terms. It is represented solely in the descriptive terms of youth, shining commitment and humanitarian love according to the event described by the narrator and observed by the mother:

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[34] It is interesting to note here the part played by Gorky in the homogenization of Soviet literary language in the 1930s. See R. Robin, *op. cit.*, particularly chapter 8, "The Establishment of Monologism."

> A feeling of spiritual affinity with the workers of the world was born in this stuffy little room. It was felt by all, including the mother, and though she could not grasp its meaning, she was aware of its force--so youthful, so intoxicatingly joyful, so full of hope. ...
>
> This childlike but firm faith manifested itself more and more frequently among them, in a more and more exalted form, growing into a mighty force. And when the mother beheld it, she instinctively felt that the world had indeed begotten something great and good like the sun, which she could see with her own eyes. (47)

The language accorded the ideological opponents of Pavel and his comrades is not the living medium of an alternate world view but simply the negation or opposite of the language of the revolutionaries. Thus, while Pavel and his cohorts are youthful, serious and progressive the men who condemn them in the final court scene are old, cynical and reactionary:

> All of the judges seemed to be suffering from ill health. An unwholesome weariness was expressed in their manners and voices, and their faces showed this same weariness and boredom. (34)

More extremely, Gorky's narrative utilizes the naivete of the mother's character to render the language, and thus ideology, of opposition as being incomprehensible, literally unrepresentable:

> The prosecutor stood to the right of the judges, his face turned to them, one elbow on the desk. Having taken a deep breath and made a little flourish with his right hand, he began to speak. The mother could not grasp his first words. His voice flowed thick and smooth but uneven--sometimes fast, sometimes slow. For a while the words would come slow and monotonous, like painstaking stitches, then suddenly they would swarm up and

> circle like flies about a lump of sugar. But she found nothing sinister in them. They drifted through the room as cold as snow and as grey as ashes, filling it little by little with something as unpleasant as fine dry dust. This speech seemed not to reach Pavel and his comrades; evidently it did not affect them in the least. ...
>
> The prosecutor's words spread a fog invisible to the eye, which thickened about the judges, enveloping them in a cloud of indifference and weary waiting. The senior judge sat stiffly erect, and from time to time the grey dots behind his spectacles melted into the colourless expanse of his face. (346-47)

The language of *Mother* isolates a single ideology for representation and simultaneously excludes the languages of other forms of life together with their competing ideologies. Effectively, language insulates Bolshevik ideology from the living diversity of the social-context which the novel purports to represent.

In each of the above discussed instances of Gorky's narrative depiction of time, space, plot, character and language, therefore, *Mother* is shown to illustrate the fundamental dichotomy at the core of the socialist realist novel: the representation of what is and what ought to be. And also as indicated above, Gorky's formulation of this dichotomy in *Mother* involved the use of "realist" conventions in the service of an ideological message which ultimately subverted the requirements of his realist form. In each instance, the formal requirements of realism were subordinated to the needs of a teleologically framed ideology, Bolshevik ideology. Thus the novel of 1906, and subsequent canonic text of socialist realism, conformed exemplarily to the requirements of *partiinost'*, the concept most explicitly articulated in 1905 and subsequently preserved as the foundational principle of socialist realism. *Partiinost'* and *Mother* shared the same emphasis on a totalizing ideology and thus both shared and helped to create a specific method for the representation of an ideological vision that acted as a surrogate reality.

Chapter 5

Representing Chaos and Unity: Modernism and *Ulysses*

If Maxim Gorky's *Mother* and socialist realism provided this study with the example of a literary text and method which strained the limits of the novel form through adherence to the representation of an ideology rather than reality, then James Joyce's *Ulysses* offers the example of a text which, in its sheer stylistic and thematic exuberance, questions the certainty of reality and the possibility of representing it in stable generic categories. While Gorky's *Mother* relied on the petrified form and solidified conventions of the nineteenth-century realist novel, Joyce's *Ulysses* purposefully transformed those same conventions. Separated by only fifteen years, the two novels nonetheless represent two opposing approaches to the representation of reality in the modern age. Indeed, at least one prominent figure of a subsequent critical tradition has identified the two novels as the paradigmatic examples of socialist realism and modernism.[1] Even contemporaneously, the fundamental difference and novelty of the manner of representing reality presented by *Ulysses* was noted with critical revulsion in the Soviet Union. Hence Karl Radek's infamous attack on *Ulysses* at the very 1934 All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers which enshrined socialist realism as the artistic method of the new Soviet state.[2]

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[1] See Georg Lukács, *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism*, trans. John and Necke Mander, (London: Merlin Press, 1973).

It is not just as a striking contrast to the representational stance of socialist realism, however, that *Ulysses* provides an excellent example for the present study. *Ulysses* is such a text that any discussion of it invokes consideration of the interrelations between *Ulysses*, Joyce's oeuvre and the circumambient social and historical setting of Joyce's production and reception in a manner which is in fundamental accordance with the principles of a literary historical method outlined in chapter three. Joyce, for instance, explicitly stated his artistic intentions at various times, however opaquely and contradictorily on still other occasions.[3] As Maurice Beebe has put it in reference to the proliferating critical schemata used to elucidate the structure of *Ulysses*: "This is one of the most completely *intended* and *executed* books in the history of literature."[4] Likewise, the relationship between Joyce's life and his artistic production is of immediate relevance, particularly in understanding his vision of the creation of an artist and aesthetic and his complex relationship to Dublin and Irish culture and history in general.[5] Joyce's relationship to his cultural environment trans-nationally conceived is also of importance. For although Joyce freely acknowledged his debt to specific elements of the Western literary tradition and to certain contemporary figures, he nonetheless refused to allow himself to be drawn into the polemics and manifesto-writing politics which attended the establishment of modernism, the literary movement he is said to be representative of.[6] Relatedly, Joyce's oeuvre exhibits a full range of involvement with, and response from, his cultural context--from polemical criticism and dismissal through censorship and legal prosecution to critical eulogies and subsequent canonization.[7] Still again, Joyce's work is demonstrably intimately related to his specific literary environment. Intertextual ties in Joyce's writing may be related not simply to the central themes and conventions of the Western literary tradition but more specifically to the other texts of his own corpus in a full range of forms from imitation through adoption and re-workings to open parody. It has been suggested, for instance, that "each of Joyce's three major works ... is implicitly a redefinition of the work before it, and each constitutes part of a continuous aesthetic quest."[8] And finally, Joyce explicitly emphasized his manipulation of formal structure as a means of creating forms which responded to the changed aesthetic and socio-historic conditions of his self-consciously modern age.

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[2] For a discussion of this episode and of Joyce's critical reception in Russian and Soviet letters in general see Neil Cornwell, *James Joyce and the Russians*, (Houndmills: The MacMillan Press, 1992). See also Jeremy Hawthorn, "*Ulysses*, Modernism and Marxist Criticism," in *James Joyce and Modern Literature*, eds. W.J. McCormack and Alistair Stead, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul) 112-25.

[3] For two of the most famous specific examples see, Frank Budgen, *James Joyce and the Making of "Ulysses"*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1972) and Stuart Gilbert, *James Joyce's "Ulysses"*, (London: Faber and Faber, 1930). Joyce's letters also contain numerous, though at times misleading, insights into his work and his relationship to it.

[4] Maurice Beebe, "*Ulysses* and the Age of Modernism," *James Joyce Quarterly* 10.1 (1972): 179.

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[5] See Richard Ellman, *James Joyce*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959).

[6] Christopher Butler, "Joyce, modernism and post-modernism," in *The Cambridge Companion to James Joyce*, ed. Derek Attridge, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 266.

[7] See *James Joyce: The Critical Heritage, Vol. One 1902-27* and *Vol. Two 1928-41*, ed., Robert H. Deming (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970). As an example of the kind of critical controversy still engendered by Joyce's legacy, one need only consider the polemics surrounding the editing of *Ulysses*. See, for instance, the special number of *Studies in the Novel*, "A Special Issue on Editing *Ulysses*," 22.2 (1990).

Apart from indicating the applicability of the five categories of intentions, motivations, culture, the corpus and formal structure for a literary historical method in a specific literary example, the relevance of each of these categories to Joyce, and particularly *Ulysses*, also indicates the expansive range of literary, cultural and historical ramifications which are necessarily involved in any interpretive understanding of *Ulysses*. In short, *Ulysses* is a big book. And in treating it as a novel which at once represents, and is representative of, its social and historical environment, some form of methodological strategy informing the principles of an unavoidable process of inclusion and exclusion is required. Of the five above categories, this study will isolate and emphasize two--culture and formal structure--with which to approach this problem. Thus, this chapter will seek to trace the central interconnections between modernism as a specific cultural movement and *Ulysses*, showing at once the necessarily representational character of this novel in particular and the protean nature of the novel form in general. For once again, though now in its modernist manifestation, the novel will be shown to contain the qualities which perennially provide for the representation of reality, literature's constant connection of word and world.

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[8] John Fletcher and Malcolm Bradbury, "The Introverted Novel," p. 405 in *Modernism: 1890-1930*, eds., M. Bradbury and J. McFarlane, (Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1978).

1. The Representation of Modernity:

Like the term realism discussed above, the term modernism is subject to various uses and hence notoriously unstable. Modernity may be used as a term denoting change and progress in any historical continuum, as a segment of history identified as contemporary and, relatedly, as a specific period defined historically by its conspicuous urge to progress as a means of self-conscious differentiation from preceding ages. In each of these instances, modernity denotes an attitude of qualitative detachment from the past, of progress defined on a temporal continuum. As a uniquely aesthetic concept modernism becomes both a period term and a concept descriptive of a specific type of artistic expression.[9] Here too, the notion of modernism as a designation of aesthetic orientation implies change and progress, particularly the development of conventions of artistic expression which break with, or transcend, those previous forms identified with a preceding age and style. In the instances of both socio-historical and aesthetic modernism, the notion of "progress" within a historical continuum is essential.[10] With the introduction of late nineteenth- early twentieth-century aesthetic modernism, however, these similarities alter. For, as Matei Calinescu describes, the aesthetic modernism of the twentieth-century introduces a fissure in the essentially historical understanding of modernity and modernism. Rather than continuing the tradition bequeathed to the concept of modernity from the Christian middle-ages of faith in history as the vehicle of change and contemporaneous progress, aesthetic modernism developed an attitude which broke with modernity's humanist faith in history (86). Essentially, the tools of contemporary modernity developed since the Enlightenment--reason, progress, scientific method--were rejected while new tools were sought to understand and awaken from what had become the nightmare of history. Modernism, therefore, adapted modernity's myth of progress only now to fashion a poetics of crisis and disruption which defined

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[9] Thus, for example, as a means of escaping the confusion engendered by the possible uses of the term "modernism," the contributors to *Joyce, Modernity and its Mediation* ed. Christine van Boheemen of *European Joyce Studies* 1, (1989) resort to a specific definition. See Christine van Boheemen's introduction: "We shall use 'Modern(ism)' with reference to the literary-historical movement, and 'modern(ism)' for Western thought roughly

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since Descartes" 3.

[10] For discussion of the centrality of a sequential concept of history and of value in modernism, see Matei Calinescu, *Five Faces of Modernism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987) 13, 86-87.

itself in opposition to, rather than support for, "bourgeois" progress. This distinction between aesthetic modernism and the older urge to modernity is essential. For in it is the basis of modernism's unique relationship to history and its emphasis on formal conventions as the basis for a dramatically reconceived understanding of an autonomously aesthetic response to the world, one which differed profoundly from modernity's previous forms of aesthetic expression. Realism in its mid nineteenth-century novelty, for instance, could be conceived as an illustration of the modernizing urge broadly conceived and articulated in artistic form, though certainly not "modernist" in its totalizing, rationalizing and mimetic approach. Indeed, in a charitable moment the same point could be made of socialist realism, in its inception, an artistic doctrine based on faith in, and the promise of, history scientifically understood. Recognition of modernism's breach with the traditions of modernity into a seemingly hermetic aesthetic sphere as a response to contemporary historical conditions provides a means of approaching the problem posed by Eysteinsson as central to the study of modernism:

> ...the most important task facing modernist studies: we need to ask ourselves how the concept of autonomy, so crucial to many theories of modernism, can possibly coexist with the equally prominent view of modernism as a historically explosive paradigm. (16)

It also offers a view to understanding the agonism and purposeful difficulty and unpopularity of modernism identified from Ortega y Gasset through Renato Poggioli to Peter Bürger.[11] For new and complex aesthetic forms signal at once modernism's dissatisfaction with modernity's humanist cult of progress and faith in inherited traditions of thought while indicating alternative means for representing the perceived complexity of contemporary reality. Yet the suggestion that modernism may be defined solely as a disruption from previous visions of history and a turning to increased formalism lends the movement a singularly conservative, reactionary character, implying a peevish dissatisfaction with, and retreat from, history, rather than engagement with it. Such a view is insufficient to accommodate the literary achievement of so historical a writer as Thomas Mann let alone to explain the complexity of modernism as an aesthetic movement widespread enough to comprise a historical period. Modernism is, as Bradbury and McFarlane have made the premise of their well-known collection of essays, more than solely an aesthetic movement.[12]

The conditions for modernism's claim to identification with a historical period lie not simply in its rejection of former traditions, but in its ability to articulate the consciousness of a new age. Consistent with its source in modernity, modernism is an art of response and formation, of an urge, in aesthetic form, to create new conventions of individual, communal and historical understanding. Modernist art defined itself in its response to the greatly transformed social and historical conditions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In this respect, modernism is the art concomitant with and responsive to a profoundly changed reality. As Bradbury and McFarlane state it:

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[11] See Jose Ortega y Gasset *The Dehumanization of Art and Other Essays on Art, Culture and Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), Renato Poggioli *The Theory of the Avant-Garde* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), "Agonism and Futurism" 60-77, and Peter Bürger, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, tran. M. Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), "On the Problem of the Autonomy of Art in Bourgeois Society" 35-54.

[12] See M. Bradbury and J. McFarlane, "The Name and Nature of Modernism," p. 28 in M. Bradbury and J. McFarlane, eds., *op. cit.*

> (Modernism) is the one art that responds to the scenario of our chaos. It is the art consequent on Heisenberg's 'Uncertainty principle.' of the destruction of civilization and reason in the First World War, of the world changed and reinterpreted by Marx, Freud and Darwin, of capitalism and constant industrial acceleration, of existential exposure to meaninglessness or absurdity. It is the literature of technology. (27)

In the same collection of essays from which the above quote is drawn, Allan Bullock and James McFarlane, in separate articles document the spirit of ferment in various socio-cultural, scientific and economic spheres which find expression in the art of modernism.[13] Taken together, this ferment amounted to an accelerated and intensified dislocation of the established paradigms of science and culture for understanding and ordering the world. Given this changed understanding of reality, modernist art responded with its own questioning of the former structure of artistic composition, the former conventions for apprehending reality. As reality could not be assumed to be stable and fixed even in its social and historical dimensions--the ontological precondition for realist fiction--the narrative paradigms for representing it as such had to be abandoned. Conventions enabling linear narration, omniscient narrative voice, the use of referential language and fictive identification with the established social and historical forces of reality were "defamiliarized." This is not to suggest that the project of imitating reality was abandoned by modernism, particularly in the novel form. Rather, as the understanding of reality changed, so too the methods for imitating it were modified. In this respect, as Brian McHale has indicated, modernism is the literature of an epistemological dominant, the literature of uncertainty and provisionality in the face of profound scepticism concerning the identifiability and representability of reality.[14]

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[13] See A. Bullock, "The Double Image," 58-70 and J. McFarlane "The Mind of Modernism," 71-93 in M. Bradbury and J. McFarlane eds., *ibid.* See also Richard J. Quinones, *Mapping Literary Modernism: Time and Development*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985) especially chapter three "Transformations."

Thus far, then, modernism may be characterized by its conscious abandonment of modernity's contemporary positivist faith in the progressive trajectory of historical development and in its response to modernity's reinterpretation of the fundamental principles of science and culture. In this, modernism may be seen as an identifiable period within a historically longer process of modernity. Modernism is also an aesthetic movement in its artistic anticipation, reflection and ultimate expression of these same concerns in the cultural sphere. The heightened formalism of modernism has already been noted above as an aspect of the agonistic tendency within this movement. Agonism, the will to style *pour épater le bourgeois*, however is not sufficient to explain modernism's revolution in formal structure. Modernism's cult of formal innovation is not an incidental development, a random response in artistic manner to the epistemological crisis of the period. Rather, the search for new conventions of artistic creation was ensured by the very conditions of the period, the possibilities of representation.

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[14] Brian McHale, *Postmodernist Fiction*, (New York and London, Methuen, 1987), especially "From modernist to postmodernist fiction: change of dominant," 3-25.

As "reality" no longer provided a stable external order as subject for representation the task of art became both the representation of that state of uncertainty and the creation of a surrogate order. T.S. Eliot explicitly identified this aspect of modernism's innovations in representational intent in his comments upon the use of myth as a component of composition in *Ulysses*: "(using myth) is simply a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history."[15] Herein lie the seeds of the central paradox of modernism's motivation to the artistic representation of reality. Given modernism's preconditions of epistemological uncertainty, the goal of imitating the provisionality of reality, while simultaneously creating a new order, can never be reached. A new order or whole can never finally be posited, can never be offered as more than a possibility.

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[15] T.S. Eliot, "*Ulysses*, Order and Myth," from F. Kermode ed., *The Selected Prose of T.S. Eliot*, (London: Faber and Faber, 1975) 177.

This paradox has a number of significant ramifications. In terms of the style or form of the movement, modernism can never solidify into a specific structure or pattern of conventions. Hence the oft stated critical opinion from the period of modernism's dominance that the new art was chaotic and formless. There is no modernist "style;" modernism is rather a continuous seeking, implementation and abandonment of styles, often in a manner specific to a single work and author.[16] This has obvious implications for readers attempting to "normalize" modernist texts and for critics and theorists of literature like Georg Lukács who famously complained that modernism lacked a typology.[17] Regarding content, modernist literature resists formulating final interpretive meaning. Interpretation and the synthesis of shards of relevance into meaning is invited in modernist literature, even provoked, but never given unalloyed with ambiguity. Approximate to the reality of modernity, the meaning of modernist literature is always relative. Modernist art, therefore, represents the reality of an epistemologically uncertain age by forestalling the establishment of typological conventions of either form or content. It is a representation founded on the imitation of reality which is external to fiction, but which can not be apprehended in its totality and thus may best be approximated in parts which are then to be interpreted into wholes. Apart from seeking stylistic renewal, therefore, modernism demands interpretation; it actively requires the cognitive formation of an order of meaning in a process of reader interpretation which mirrors the artist's interpretive relationship to external reality. The modernist mode of representation in this way as well indicates an imitation of reality in fiction, reproducing for the reader the author's hesitant relationship with the world.

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[16] Bradbury and McFarlane in referring to Irving Howe make this same point. *Op. cit.*, 29.

[17] G. Lukács, "The Ideology of Modernism," *op. cit.*

Due to these conditions, modernism is irreducible to a set of consistently applicable conventions. Modernism as both a historical period and an aesthetic movement is not contained as the sum of specific artistic conventions within a definable method. At best, modernism may be related to a set of general descriptive tendencies which resulted from a new and complicated understanding of reality and the attempt to represent it as faithfully as possible. Such a list of tendencies would include epistemological uncertainty concerning the reliability and accessibility of knowledge of the world, an erosion of faith in the existence of a shared body of communal values--secular or metaphysical, scepticism concerning the previous means of representing reality in art, extreme formal self-consciousness in the creation of new conventions of representation, textual ambiguity and linguistic experimentalism.[18] These tendencies find expression in various cultural contexts and in varying genres in differing degrees. The novel, the genre of interest in this study, expectedly exhibits these inclinations, as in the example of *Ulysses*. Before turning to the specific example of *Ulysses*, however, Virginia Woolf's contemporary appraisal of the modernist novel will provide an insightful introduction. Woolf's comments are particularly useful as she delineates the central features of the modernist novel in contrast to the exhausted forms of the then contemporary variant of the realist novel. Although her contrast is not made in specific reference to socialist realism, it complements our own observations concerning socialist realism's adherence to outmoded means of representing the modern world. Furthermore, Woolf's commentary suggests that changes brought to the form of the novel are a result of changes to the perception of the novel's perennial subject of representation--reality.

In tracing a binary opposition between two forms of contemporary novel, Woolf identifies two contrasting relationships between reality and the novel form. The first, represented by the Edwardian authors A. Bennett, H.G. Wells and J. Galsworthy and described as materialist, is censured not for any lack of formal craftsmanship or sensitivity to detail but rather for its enthralment to the conventions and expectations of an old novelistic form which had served a former understanding of reality. In retaining the compositional techniques of an antecedent conception of reality, these novelists and their novels failed to depict the reality they sought to represent:

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[18] For one such attempt to delimit the central conventions of modernism see Douwe W. Fokkema, *Literary History, Modernism, and Postmodernism*, (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1984). Responding specifically to *Ulysses*, see "*Ulysses* and the Age of Modernism," *op. cit.*, where M. Beebe distinguishes four characteristic features of modernism: formalism, an attitude of detachment and non-commitment, the use of myth as ordering principle and finally an "Impressionist" tendency in representation to accent the viewer rather than the subject viewed. 175.

> Admitting the vagueness which afflicts all criticism of novels, let us hazard the opinion that for us at this moment the form of fiction most in vogue more often misses than secures the thing we seek. Whether we call it life or spirit, truth or reality, this, the essential thing, has moved off, or on, and refuses to be contained any longer in such ill-fitting vestments as we provide. Nevertheless, we go on perseveringly, conscientiously, constructing our two and thirty chapters after a design which more and more ceases to resemble the vision in our minds.[19]

In contradistinction to this "materialist" relationship between reality and the novel is the "spiritual," exemplified here by Joyce and *Ulysses* and the type of novel writing later to be described as modernist. While their methods are perplexing, the contemporary novelists are credited in their use of new conventions with coming "closer to life." Woolf accentuates the relationship between the modernists' changed manner of novel writing and the changed perception of reality, suggesting that the latter directly influences the former:

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[19] Virginia Woolf, "Modern Fiction," 105 from *Collected Essays*, Vol. 2, (London: The Hogarth Press, 1966).

> Examine for a moment an ordinary mind on an ordinary day. The mind receives a myriad impressions--trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel. From all sides they come, an incessant shower of innumerable atoms and as they fall, as they shape themselves into the life of Monday or Tuesday, the accent falls differently from the old; ... Life is not a series of gig-lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end. Is it not the task of the novelist to convey this varying, this unknown and uncircumscribed spirit, whatever aberration or complexity it may display, with as little mixture of the alien and external as possible? We are not pleading merely for courage and sincerity; we are suggesting that the proper stuff of fiction is a little other than custom would have us believe it. (106)

While close examination of the language of science and the metaphors of incomplete vision embedded in the above passage would undoubtedly repay the effort in suggestive parallels to modernism's emphasis on progress and epistemological uncertainty, we will observe only that Woolf's contemporary appraisal of Joyce's *Ulysses* and modernism seems to provide preconfirmation, and a direction for closer examination, to the assumption that the novel form alters its representational configuration in the attempt to remain faithful to reality, "the proper stuff of fiction." It is now necessary to look closer at the component aspects of *Ulysses* as a novel and attempt to discern the extent to which it corresponds to a "modernist" aesthetic, an aesthetic and period defined here in relation to a changed understanding of reality.

The first step in this closer examination of *Ulysses* as a modernist novel may well be to respond explicitly to the question: Is *Ulysses* a novel? The question is not merely rhetorical. Eliot in his influential account of *Ulysses* and modernism raised the issue precisely because he felt that reality in the modern age demanded artistic structures different from that of the novel, a form suited to another age:

> I am not begging the question in calling *Ulysses* a "novel;" and if you call it an epic it will not matter. If it is not a novel, that is simply because the novel is a form which will no longer serve; it is because the novel, instead of being a form, was simply the expression of an age which had not sufficiently lost all form to feel the need of something stricter. ... It is, I think, because Mr. Joyce and Mr. (Wyndham) Lewis, being "in advance" of their time, felt a conscious or probably unconscious dissatisfaction with the form, that their novels are more formless than those of a dozen clever writers who are unaware of its obsolescence. (177)

Eliot, given his lack of historical perspective at the time, left the question of the novelness of *Ulysses* open while simultaneously suggesting that the use of myth as method rather than narrative made "the modern world possible for art."

More recently, and now with a post-structuralist consciousness, Jennifer Levine has also raised the question. Levine's approach, however, is more ecumenical than Eliot's. Choosing between the categories of poetry, novel and text, she indicates the manner in which decisions concerning the genre of *Ulysses* effect its reading. Her touchstone in gauging the novelness of *Ulysses* is solely its manipulation of character, which she finds in abundance but, ultimately, insufficient as a principle to provide the best generic category for the fullest reading of *Ulysses*.[20] On the basis of this somewhat dubious strategy of generic taxonomy and in specific reference to "Oxen of the Sun," Levine is led to a set of hypothetical questions which ultimately disqualify the generic category of novel as the most appropriate strategy for reading *Ulysses*:

> "Oxen of the Sun" transgresses the principle of ownership on which both poetic and novelistic readings depend. ... To read *Ulysses* as a novel is to ask, at every turn, "who speaks?" and, beyond that, "what do these words say about the one who 'owns' them?" To read *Ulysses* as a text is to be not a little perverse and focus instead on the places where connections come unstuck and the weaving frays, because it is precisely at such points that the playfulness of the text implicates the reader and allows itself to be seen. (157)

Ulysses, however, can not be so easily disentangled from the category of novel, despite the "playfulness" this might entail. As the following discussion will attempt to demonstrate, *Ulysses* requires the generic structure of the novel to ensure it a site of formal unity. It is a poetics of the novel, between the disparate tendencies of poetic and textual forms, which provide a structure simultaneously cohesive and flexible enough to contain and express modernism's representation of a fragmented and uncertain reality.[21] For *Ulysses*, in its representation of reality, will be shown to exhibit the central epistemological condition of modernism and express it in the urge to establish an order and unity in the flux of modernity's chaos and fragmentation. The novel's concurrent flexibility and structural unity in the portrayal of time, place, plot, character and language is indispensable to the representation of the reality of modernism in *Ulysses*.

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[20] Jennifer Levine, "*Ulysses*," in *The Cambridge Companion to James Joyce*, *op. cit.*, 142.

Time, an important component of the novel, is also central to an understanding of modernism. Ricardo Quinones uses time in his study *Mapping Literary Modernism* as a central ordering concept, stating that: "(m)odernism can be located historically in regard to those countries or individuals that enjoyed an advanced notion of time..." (5). Similarly, Matei Calinescu isolates the importance of time as a foundational component of modernism:

> Modernity in the broadest sense, as it has asserted itself historically, is reflected in the irreconcilable opposition between sets of values corresponding to (1) the objectified, socially measurable time of capitalist civilization (time as a more or less precious commodity, bought and sold on the market), and (2) the personal, subjective, imaginative *durée*, the private time created by the unfolding of the 'self.' The latter identity of *time* and *self* constitutes the foundation of modernist culture. (5)

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[21] Of note here is Joyce's comment in a letter of 1918: "Le problème de ma race est tellement compliqué qu'on a besoin de tous les moyens d'un art élastique pour l'esquisser." *Letters of James Joyce*, ed. Stuart Gilbert, (London: Faber and Faber, 1957) 118.

2. *Ulysses* and the Modernist Novel:

Time is also everywhere in *Ulysses*. And as with so much in *Ulysses*, it is an element which operates simultaneously, in various dimensions, as a principle at once of fragmentation and of cohesion, of character subjectivity and historico-mythic unity. In discussing time as a component of the novel in chapter two, it was observed that the novel differed from other genres in part in its conceptualizing of time. It was suggested that the present, in its fluidity and inconclusivity, functioned as the novel's temporal point of departure and that the novel's relationship with history tended to spring from the contemporary. Joyce's *Ulysses* affirms these generalizations and indeed develops them by emphasizing the depiction of time not simply in thematic content but in formal composition. Although *Ulysses* emphasizes the affective influence of time in its representations, time is never unproblematized, presented merely as a process of temporal unfolding. Time does not function as an epistemological given; instead it is thematized as fragmented and relative to differing perspectives, an uncertain concept with profound consequences for one's individual sense of being and for history as a transpersonal and transtemporal structure of understanding. *Ulysses* as a novel, in sum, seeks in its relationship with time to formulate a surrogate whole to replace the absence of time as uncomplicated epistemological precept.

In its most innocent, prosaic manifestations, time is revealed in *Ulysses* not as a structural feature contributing to the faithful depiction of reality as illusion, but as an integral component of reality perforce present in reality's representation. Appointments are made, a funeral is attended, lunch is eaten, a horse-race is run, clocks chime, the sun sets, a child is born--all take place in time according to communal expectations of reality. In this respect, *Ulysses* is scrupulously accurate in its depiction of temporal duration. The depiction of time here is unlike that of the realist novel, however; it is represented without additional, external conventions of narrative exposition. Time does not constitute the setting for a representation of reality but functions as a seamless element of the reality being represented, partaking not in the creation of a realist illusion of reality but the modernist capturing of reality's temporal development. A single example from "Telemachus" will suffice to illustrate Joyce's method. In this scene, Haines, Buck Mulligan and Stephen Dedalus prepare for breakfast:

> ... The grub is ready. Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts. Where's the sugar? O, jay, there's no milk.
> Stephen fetched the loaf and the pot of honey and the buttercooler from the locker. Buck Mulligan sat down in a sudden pet.
> --What sort of a kip is this? he said. I told her to come after eight.
> --We can drink it black, Stephen said thirstily. There's a lemon in the locker.

> --O, damn you and your Paris fads! Buck Mulligan said. I want Sandycove milk.
> Haines came in from the doorway and said quietly:
> --That woman is coming up with the milk.[22]

Without narratorial comment, it is not until the final line of the above quoted passage that the connection between missing milk and a woman expected after eight is made clear, simultaneously to introduce a character and establish the approximate time of morning. In this example, time and character manifest themselves together in temporal development.

Ulysses also reverses the usual procedure of locating character in temporal setting by orienting time according to character, thereby stressing the personal quality of time as subjective *durée*. In "Wandering Rocks," for instance, a single space of time is fragmented according to the various consciousnesses which experience it, each in its different way. Father Conmee takes a walk, Molly Bloom tosses a coin to a beggar, Leopold Bloom leafs through volumes of romance fiction while Blazes Boylan prepares for his assignation with Molly. Each is represented occupying his or her moment of time individually and simultaneously as a collective Irish group encompassed by representatives of church and crown. And while each individual's action reverberates with significances for those of others, no one is conscious of the role he or she is playing at that moment in a larger unity which will play itself out in the fullness of time. Though isolated and individual in personal time, each is part of a larger temporal whole. Similarly, just as Leopold Bloom muses that "life is a stream," Molly's thought patterns reveal that the aquatic metaphor also applies to time in human life. *Ulysses* reminds us that humans occupy moments or fragments of time only in relation to other humans. From the perspective of the conscious individual, however, life and time are a single stream without beginning or end. Molly's interior monologue of "Penelope" is, like the reality of individual human life, outside communal standards of time.[23] Molly's thoughts are prompted by the recalled actions and speech of others which merge seamlessly into her consciousness. These thoughts can be separated into specific moments of time only by artificially diverting them from the larger stream of Molly's consciousness which is a unity unto itself. Thus, Joyce's narrative represents the essential temporal unity of human life and thought processes by beginning Molly's interior monologue *in medias res*, as her mental response to Bloom's request for breakfast in bed, and ends it in sleep, an interruption of consciousness which pauses without ending. "Penelope," a portion of Joyce's masterpiece usually celebrated as an unmediated account of human psychology, is also, then, an example of Joyce's rendering of the novel's relationship to time. Molly's interior monologue represents the pinnacle of the novel's urge and ability to represent reality in the simultaneous unfolding of time.

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[22] James Joyce, *Ulysses*, "Students Edition," ed. Hans Walter Gabler, (Harmondsworth: Penquin, 1986) 19-11. All references will be given with page numbers to this edition.

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[23] Appropriately, it is only Molly's monologue of "Penelope" which is represented in Stuart Gilbert's table of events and places without temporal designation. *Op. cit.*, 41. See also Joyce's letter of 7 October 1921 to Harriet Shaw Weaver that "...*Penelope* has no beginning middle or end." *Letters, op. cit.*, 172.

Although at a narrative level Joyce's novel is remarkable in its supremely novelistic melding of time and reality, it is as the thematization of history that *Ulysses* is most discussed in relation to the concept of time. As a recent issue of *James Joyce Quarterly* devoted entirely to the question of "Joyce and History" indicates, the subject is virtually inexhaustible due, in no small way, to the very manner in which Joyce thematized and represented history in *Ulysses*.[24] For *Ulysses* is a novel of a specific historic place and time realistically depicted and more, a novel of modernity and modernism, of a sense of the process of history and an incomplete search for a new understanding of history.

"Nestor" most explicitly foregrounds the theme of history. According to the schema of the contents and organization of *Ulysses* provided by Joyce to Gilbert, history is the "art" of this chapter. And in its representation of the interaction between Mr. Deasy and Stephen, two conflicting visions of history are presented. Mr. Deasy, the kindly though vaguely doddering pedant Nestor of Stephen's Telemachus, is a man literally of history who not inappropriately boasts of his familiarity with Irish history and of having seen "three generations since O'Connell's time" (26). Though doddering and at times ridiculous, especially in his anti-semitism, he is a figure more of inadequacy than of derision.[25] He represents modernity's serious-minded desire for progress, though now in out-moded form. His support of the union of Ireland with Great Britain and his fusion of interest in money and the financial acumen of the British reveals a sense of history which is materialist and pragmatic in essence. The spirit of such a vision is noble in intent yet falls short of Stephen Dedaleus' needs, revealing the ultimate failure of memory which merely accumulates and an enfeebled culmination in unsolicited opinions concerning "modern" means of treating foot and mouth disease in cattle. It's fundamental conservatism is finally revealed in Deasy's expression of the teleological form and function of history: "The ways of the Creator are not our ways, Mr. Deasy said. All human history moves towards one great goal, the manifestation of God" (28). To Deasy's credit, he intuits Stephen's fundamental, modernist difference from himself in terms which parallel Calinescu's above quoted distinction between modernity's capitalist use of time as commodity and the subjective modernist time devoted to the unfolding of the self. He realizes that an "artist" like Stephen will not long sell his time teaching history and even indicates the direction Stephen needs to take to fulfil his true vocation:

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[24] *James Joyce Quarterly* 28.4 (1991). Of particular interest in this issue given the topic at hand is William M. Chace, "Historical Realism: An Eco," 889-902. See also Marius Buning, "History and Modernity in Joyce's *Ulysses*" 127-37 in Christine van Boheemen, ed., *op. cit.*

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[25] See E.L. Epstein, "Nestor," in *James Joyce's Ulysses: Critical Essays*, ed. Clive Hart and David Hayman, (Berkeley: University of California Press) 17-28, for a sensitive reading of Mr. Deasy.

> --I foresee, Mr. Deasy said, that you will not remain here very long at this work. You were not born to be a teacher, I think. Perhaps I am wrong.
> --a learner rather, Stephen said.
> And here what will you learn more?
> Mr. Deasy shook his head.
> --Who knows? he said. To learn one must be humble. But life is the great teacher. (29)

For Stephen, who is seeking a model of personal and national understanding in history as preparation for his journey into maturity, Deasy's Tory vision of modernity's history is insufficient. It is simply inadequate as a strategy of imagination to synthesize the conflicting forces and conditions of Stephen's modernist experience. Stephen will require an answer to the problem of human history which, more than simply gathering shards of memory from the past, will synthesize them into a creative vision of past and future. That history as an exercise of memory fails is apparent to Stephen during the course of his dissatisfied musings while teaching history to already forgetful youths: "For them too history was a tale like any other too often head, their land a pawnshop" (21). For Stephen's students, Mr Deasy, whose knowledge of history is grossly infactual, as for Stephen himself, the history of memories recalled is vulnerable to the debilitating effects of time. Moreover, Stephen requires a conception of history which can accommodate his subjectivity.

Deasy's vision of history unfolding in a manifestation of God assumes a teleology which Stephen cannot accept philosophically and which, in its scale, subordinates the validity of his sense of personal experience to a larger world-historical purpose. As an individual of modernist sensibilities, lacking transcendent structures of meaning, Stephen can accept history as neither necessarily endowed with Christian hope nor as objectively structured. On the contrary, history is subjective and painful: "History, Stephen said, is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake" (28). Even as a structure of secular understanding, history offers no preformulated unity or meaning. Stephen's task, in coming to a modernist understanding of history, requires that he implement the relative unity which is his own subjective experience and transform it into a larger structure. This priorizing of personal experience in the formation of historical understanding is, in effect, to reverse the usual order of systems of historical thought which subsume the individual consciousness in totalizing schemes. Thus, Stephen, in discussing Irish history, places his own experience above that of the nation: "But I suspect, Stephen interrupted, that Ireland must be important because it belongs to me" (527). This remark, half drunkenly made to Bloom in reference to Stephen's place in Ireland as an artistic labourer in letters, alludes to the calling which will allow Stephen to implement his modernist historiography. The decision to found an historic sense of understanding on the basis of personal consciousness is not mere solipsism. In the absence of an epistemological basis in Christianity or even humanist historiography, Stephen as artist will create history. Deasy's suggestion to gain psychic and intellectual maturity through experience of the world takes on added importance and becomes an injunction of historical importance: "...to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated consciousness of my race."[26] Art's necessity becomes the conscious creation of historic understanding, a system based simultaneously in the reality of the human collective and in the imaginative power of the artist. Stephen is brought to this modernist realization of art and history in the course of his odyssey, June 16 1904. It is the understanding Joyce himself exemplified in *Ulysses* using the novel form's unique alliance to time as thematic subject and element of narrative exposition.

Before leaving the topic of the modernist use of time in *Ulysses*, it is necessary to turn briefly to the temporal setting of this novel. Related directly to the physical setting of *Ulysses*, this coordinate also displays the modernist urge to the creation of order from the stuff of uncertainty. The entire action of *Ulysses* takes place over a period of approximately 18 hours. Within those eighteen hours, the thoughts and activities of the three central characters are minutely observed. Although only eighteen hours in duration, the novel nonetheless also manages to play out, in significant parallels, the events of Homer's *Odyssey*. Given the comments of Joyce, the temptation in much criticism has been to refer immediately to the *Odyssey* as the central organizing schema according to which the events of *Ulysses* are a kind of short-hand.[27] To do so however, is to emphasize a reading of the novel which masks the interpretive instability of *Ulysses* in favour of a certainty which obscures Joyce's particularly modernist creativity. *Ulysses* is better served by a reading which recognizes the play between a representation of time in its microcosmic setting, a time historically fixed and chronologically faithful to the events enacted in it--novelistic time, in short--and time in a macrocosmic setting, the setting of epic time removed from historical change and inviolable in its unity of perspective. In the first, time is an element of reality which impinges on the lives of characters in ways often inscrutable to them in the form of chance meetings, near encounters and pre-arranged meetings. From this perspective, time is an external force influencing and fragmenting the experience of individuals in unknown ways.

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[26] James Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, (London, Paladin Books, 1988) 247.

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[27] 'I am now writing a book,' said Joyce, 'based on the wanderings of Ulysses. The *Odyssey*, that is to say, serves me as a ground plan. Only my time is recent time and all my hero's wanderings take no more than eighteen hours' 15, in Budgen, *op. cit.*

At this level it is not at all certain how Bloom will spend his day or how he will return home. In the second, time is a force of unity, the provider of a teleology in beginnings and ends, the force which will assuredly bring Odysseus home to Penelope at the end of the plot. *Ulysses*, as a modernist novel, operates between the two, longing for the certainty of a transcendent perspective, but confined to the uncertainty human time entails.

The setting of Joyce's novel is, famously, Dublin. And just as famously, Joyce told Frank Budgen that he wished "to give a picture of Dublin so complete that if the city one day suddenly disappeared from the earth it could be reconstructed from (his) book."[28] This comment, while indicating Joyce's faith in the representational properties of the novel and his own intentions, falls short of a proper appreciation of Joyce's modernist innovation in the novel's use of place. As a corollary to the novel's temporal setting in the present, the point of contact with unfolding historical development, the novel form favours settings where characters may interact causally with their environment. This is indisputably the case in *Ulysses*. Dublin is minutely delineated in no small measure as an expression of its utter familiarity to the characters of the novel. Undoubtedly, for this reason, as Budgen observed, *Ulysses* lacks specific description as if to assume that the reader has the same acquaintance with Dublin as the characters:

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[28] F. Budgen, *ibid.*, 69.

> ...it is not by way of description that Dublin is created in *Ulysses*. ... Streets are named but never described. Houses and interiors are shown to us, but as if we entered them as familiars, not as strangers come to take stock of the occupants and inventory their furniture, Bridges over the Liffey are crossed and recrossed, named and that is all. (69)

The degree of connectedness between Dublin, its history and qualities and the characters of *Ulysses* lend the novel its naturalistic quality. Stephen's growing propensity to drink, for instance, has as much to do with the customs of Dublin as the example of his father. Similarly, the plot of *Ulysses* is intimately related to the representation of Dublin in, for example, the funeral procession of "Hades" and the viceregal cavalcade of "Wandering Rocks" which, as we have already observed, unites the perspectives of differing figures in one event. The setting of *Ulysses*, then, is integral to the plot and form of this novel. In this Dublin fulfils the requirements of setting in a realist novel. As a modernist novel, however, Dublin is more and less than the Paris of Balzac and Flaubert or the St. Petersburg of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, the environments wherein characters interact with the various social and historical forces which determine their lives within a larger social collective. Less, because "history" does not take place in Dublin, June 16 1904 in terms of dramatized world historical events. Historical forces are at play and the concept of history is thematized, but they must be interpreted out of the day to day events and thoughts of the characters in interaction with their "banal" environment. The absence of setting as the particular confluence point of specific events calls forth the synthesizing power of the reader. Less also, because even the city of Dublin is reduced in each scene of the novel from its totality to an isolated setting within a setting. More, because the specificity of the thoughts and events of the characters and the themes of each individual chapter and physical setting are so intimately related to the very geography of Dublin. Stephen and Bloom, father and son, significantly almost meet in the national library while Stephen recounts his theory of Hamlet's paternity in the loquacious episode "Scylla and Charybdis." The English language gestates and is born in the hospital while, in another example, Stephen finds his spiritual home at number 7 Eccles street in "Ithaca." Furthermore, each of these isolated events, placed in their specific settings, interact on a thematic level to create larger unities just as each setting forms the larger whole of Dublin. The individual settings, times and themes, while readable as fragments, take on meaning in the unity which is a day in Dublin. In short, as Joseph Frank has famously indicated, the physical setting of Joyce's *Ulysses*, Dublin, serves as a force of unity in the context of fragmentation:

> Joyce desired in this way to build up in the reader's mind a sense of Dublin as a totality, including all the relations of the characters to one another and all the events that enter their

> consciousness. The reader is intended to acquire this sense as he progresses through the novel, connecting allusions and references spatially and gradually becoming aware of the patterns of relationships. At the conclusion it might almost be said that Joyce literally wanted the reader to become a Dubliner. For this is what Joyce demands: that the reader have at hand the same instinctive knowledge of Dublin life, the same sense of Dublin as huge, surrounding organism, that the Dubliner possesses as a birthright.[29]

Setting, then, is woven into the meaning of *Ulysses* through its identification with the very form of the novel.

The plot structure of *Ulysses*, as well, reveals traces of a modernist presence in the novel form. For while in its essentials, the plot of *Ulysses* retains the novel's traditional concern for a full representation of reality via contemporary depictions of individuals, it diverges in significant ways from this familial pattern. In its formulation of plot, *Ulysses* encodes modernism's desire to postulate order in apparent meaninglessness.

Indeed, the most notable immediate feature of *Ulysses* is its apparent lack of plot. As Peter Faulkner observes, *Ulysses* seems "to lack almost all the qualities of the novel as it is generally understood, having virtually no story, no plot, almost no action, little characterization in the usual sense, no real adventure or romantic interest, no moral values or significant philosophy to impart" (48). *Ulysses* does have a bewildering array of stylistic devices employed to depict the rather mundane events of an earthly trinity of characters. Rather than a clearly discernible plot, then, *Ulysses* unfolds--*pace* Frank--with the passing of a day in Dublin which, more than any feature of the novel informs the organization of the story. It is left to the reader to accumulate the significances of changing conjunctions between stylistic forms and thematic events to arrive at interpretive meaning.[30] In this way, *Ulysses* seeks interpretation insofar as the barest of plots forces the reader to employ other strategies of interpretation. Accordingly, the history of the reception of *Ulysses* abounds in psychological, sociological, political, historical, religious, formalistic and other readings which, while legitimate in the integrity of meaning they derive and construct, can never, paradoxically, exhaust the thematic potential of this all but plotless novel.[31]

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[29] Joseph Frank, "Spacial Form in Modern Literature," in *The Widening Gyre: Crisis and Mastery in Modern Literature*, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1963 18-19.

At the literal level of plot, therefore, it is possible to assert that *Ulysses*, in its derivation of interpretive richness from the representation of commonplace reality, completes the project of the novel form to abandon literature's hierarchy of styles to provide as inclusive a representation of daily human reality as possible. Certainly, the depiction in *Ulysses* of the sexual, excretory and eating and drinking habits of its characters supports this view and repays reference to one of Joyce's favourite authors of the English novel's infancy--Defoe. Reference via the plot of *Ulysses* to the developments of the novel form in breaking generic adherence to levels of subject matter and style serves also to foreground the simultaneous presence of other literary models in *Ulysses*. The form and content of *Ulysses* abounds with reference to, among others, Dante, Shakespeare, Blake and, most famously, Homer. This intricate, parallel representation of a founding work of western literature in the context of a banal day in Dublin manages the quintessentially modernist gesture of providing a structure of interpretive meaning which is itself fictive. The formal self-consciousness and epistemological self-doubt of modernism is represented in a gesture which, while offering a strategy for interpreting the representation of "reality" is based on overtly fictional conventions of understanding. The mythic and fictional, therefore, provide the order and means of interpreting the reality of contemporary life and history in a move by Joyce which reverses the conventional order of literature's representation of the external world. Rather than diminishing art's relationship to reality, art is charged with the task of interpreting it. Likewise, it is the novel form, implemented by Joyce to contain this simultaneously mimetic and poetic representation of reality, which is able to bear a representation which is at once fictional and historical. For as a genre, the novel is the vessel most capable of containing Joyce's modernist responsibility for art.

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[30] It is instructive for modern readers, who have eternalized the conventions of modernism so fully as to render them unthreatening, to return to early responses to *Ulysses* for a glimpse of the philosophical despair and aesthetic minimalism of which *Ulysses* seemed a harbinger. Even so sensitive a reader as C. Jung, for instance, saw *Ulysses* as negative, its creator "more 'bereft of gods' than Nietzsche himself ever dreamed of being" while of the novel "the fact that behind a thousand veils nothing lies hidden; that it turns neither towards the mind nor towards the world, but, cold as the moon looking on from cosmic space, allows the drama of growth, being, and decay to pursue its course...." Carl Jung, "*Ulysses*," *Europäische Revue*, 9 (1932): 547-68. Quoted from Morton P. Levitt, "A Hero of Our Time: Leopold Bloom and the Myth of *Ulysses*," *James Joyce Quarterly*, 10.1 (1972): 132.

[31] Frederic Jameson, "'Ulysses' in History," in eds., W.J. McCormack and Alistair Stead, *op. cit.*, for instance, isolates three fundamental readings: the mythical, the psychoanalytical and the ethical, 126.

Characterization in Ulysses also reveals modernism's use and manipulation of the novel form. The novel developed conventions of exposition which accentuated the validity and complexity of individual experience. *Ulysses*, in its use of characterization, seizes upon this element of individuality in human experience as a force of fragmentation and accentuates it in accordance with modernism's condition of epistemological uncertainty. In accentuating the existential isolation of human existence, however, *Ulysses* nonetheless represents its characters in a search for meaning and understanding as a means of assuaging the subjectivity of modernist life.

Ulysses is a swirl of characters. According to the needs of the novel, each character in *Ulysses* has what Lukács described as an "autonomous life of interiority." Thus, despite the number of characters in *Ulysses* and Joyce's conscious parallel use of figures from Homer's array of epic characters, none is a type; each is informed in development by the contemporary situation of his or her environment and not by a pre-established world-view. Alone, the rabid Citizen of "Cyclops" approaches the condition of a character type. Even the numerous secondary characters, whose specific conditions of life are not so fully delineated, are shown to belong intimately to the world they inhabit. Jennifer Levine, in an already referred to article, convincingly demonstrates the lived specificity of even such a minor character as J.J. O'Molloy of "Aeolus," who could easily have been lost in the swirl of characters, languages and events which is this chapter and *Ulysses*:

> The construction of a world in which characters "really" live is so dense in *Ulysses* that even a marginal character like O'Molloy has his own complicated set of motives and gestures to move through--a kind of ballet that we can reconstruct and dance along with, even without the revealing inner speech that characterizes Bloom or Stephen. (145-46)

It is, as Levine alludes, the inner life of the character trinity of Stephen, Bloom and Molly which *Ulysses* presents in the absence of a traditional plot.

Ulysses opens with the negating, spiritual Stephen and closes with the affirming, earthy Molly. Literally between the two poles is Bloom, the unlikely, average abilitied, middle-aged and middle-classed hero of an eighteen hour odyssey. Across this character spectrum of individuals, each with his and her own inevitably private memories and desires, *Ulysses* depicts a full range of comic depths and epic heights of daily human life. Although *Ulysses* reveals the fundamental separateness of each character's consciousness and perspective, the three are united in their common urge to synthesize the events of their day into the unity of relevant meaning. All three have been on an epistemological odyssey of sorts, buffeted by experience in search of the home port of understanding. Each has parallelled the physical experience of Odysseus while being parallelled by the reader of *Ulysses*, who must assimilate narrative experience into meaning using the available conventions of the novel, the genre itself of epistemology, of ordering and seeking knowledge of reality. Stephen, the most self-conscious, ardent seeker of meaning, feels his subjectivity most acutely, fantasizing the world through the specificity of his personal perspective and consciousness while replaying the epistemological difficulties of the Cartesian duality of self and world during a walk on the beach:

> Ineluctable modality of the visible: at least that if no more, thought through my eyes. Signatures of all things I am here to read, seaspawn and seawrack, the nearing tide, that rusty boot. Snotgreen, bluesilver, rust: coloured signs. Limits of the diaphene. ...
>
> Stephen closed his eyes to hear his boots crush crackling wrack and shells. You are walking through it howsomever. I am, a stride at a time. A very short space of time through very short times of space. Five, six: the *Nacheinander*. ...
>
> Open your eyes now. I will. One moment. Has all vanished since? If I open and am for ever in the black adiaphane. *Basta*! I will see if I can see.
>
> See now. There all the time without you: and ever shall be, world without end. (31)

Painfully aware of himself as pathetic, insecure spectacle from the perspective of others, he nonetheless feels the worth of his unique personality. His journey of eighteen hours is to find the knowledge of worldly experience. Finally merged with the homely wisdom of paternal Bloom, he has the potential to become an artist, the synthesizer of aesthetics and history, the author of *Ulysses*.

Molly's attempt to assimilate the experience of her day and life is presented in the narrative most directly. In eight "sentences," Molly ruminates on a variety of topics linked together by the common theme of sex. Mildly egocentric and unselfconscious, in the formal sense of consciously ordering and articulating her thoughts, Molly's subjectivity is indicated not in what she thinks but in how she thinks, in the unmediated form of her thought. Her utter separateness as individual is demonstrate in the "interiority" of her monologue. Although Molly is not effected "philosophically" by the subject/object dichotomy which plagues Stephen, she too seeks union, however imperfect, with the external world, particularly the humans of her immediate acquaintance whom she cannot always understand. She ends her thoughts in an affirmation which, although ambiguous, ties together memory, sexuality, herself and Bloom in a gesture open to future possibility:

> ... and I thought well as well him as another and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and then he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes. (643-44)

It is in the characterization of Bloom, however, that modernist concerns of fragmentation and order are most apparent. Given his Homeric namesake, he is both noman and everyman, an epic hero and *homme sensuel moyen*, a product of a specific historic place and time, Dublin and of the western literary tradition. Both reprehensible and praise-worthy, he is mocked and injured by his contemporaries for personal and racial characteristics and yet emerges triumphant before the reader in his own modest fashion. Possessed of the psychological depths revealed in "Circe," he nonetheless appears to others and himself as nondescript. Leopold Bloom contains all of these historical, cultural, psychological and ethical contradictions. And in containing, representing these contradictions calls upon the interpretive power of the reader to form them into some form of unity of understanding. As a character, Bloom fulfils what Daniel Ferrer sees as "the two possible methods of characterization:

> The first one is the association of a number of characteristics with a proper name (or its substitutes). Whether these *features* are numerous or not, the noun acts as a magnet which attracts them and organizes them. ... The second method consists in identifying the character with the subject of the enunciation of a discourse, that is to say, making the character the origin of a speech, or rather, writing a speech and assigning it to a character. (148)

We will return momentarily to the issue of character and the language of a way of life.

For himself, Bloom's day is dominated by the knowledge that his wife will betray him in an adulterous sexual liaison at 4:00 in the afternoon. This specific sexual injury and the discord it threatens his marital life with is, however,but an immediate example of a whole series of potential injuries that his personal experience of life presents to him, from the death of his father and son to concerns for future financial and family life. Bloom confronts these existential dilemmas fundamentally alone with neither transcendent systems of meaning in religion, history or science nor in profound interpersonal relations. Nonetheless, the philosophy of life he embodies, while sufficient to the fragment of a single individual, has import and resonance to all:

> --But it's no use, says he. Force, hatred, history, all that. And everybody knows that it's the very opposite of that is really life.
> --What? says Alf.
> --Love, says Bloom. I mean the opposite of hatred. (273)

Such is a modest philosophy, hesitantly and ineptly articulated in "Cyclops," but one which sees him through his odyssey of eighteen hours and allows him to sleep comfortably with his adulterous wife with "more abnegation than jealousy, less envy than equanimity" (103). As a code of personal behaviour and belief applicable to all, it is also singularly appropriate as the ethical precept of a modernist novel. For although based on personal experience, it has the potential, when practised by the community, to function as a principle capable of uniting all. Bloom's character, then, itself a mixture of the shards of contradiction, operates as a vehicle for the representation of the modernist formulation of meaning out of chaos.

Chaos is a description common to superficial impressions of Joyce's use of language in *Ulysses*. The seeming linguistic chaos of *Ulysses* has a method appropriate to modernism and the novel, however. For Joyce's use of language represents not simply modernism's characteristic multiplicity of forms but also, in a gesture appropriate to the novel, the full range of languages which constitute the reality of the modernist era. Accordingly, the uses of language and the types of languages used in *Ulysses* are exceptionally wide-ranging--referential and utilitarian as well as poetic and self-referential. Common to each, however, is the novelistic affirmation of the connectedness of world and word. In its linguistic variety, *Ulysses* indicates the multitude of possibilities for representing the object-world of reality, that each language and linguistic style constitutes a new relationship with reality.

Although rhetoric does serve as the art of a single chapter, "Aeolus," *Ulysses* does not separate the thematization of language as a category or problem from the process of representing it in the narrative. In *Ulysses*, language as a theme and the various uses of language to particular ends in the narration are inseparable and omnipresent. The absence of a single narrative voice ensures the unity of language as element of form and content. For apart from echoing modernism's doubt in transcendent principles of order, this effacement of a narrative or authorial voice and language places greater emphasis on language in general as a communicative medium. *Ulysses* is written not with a language but in language. And with each style a different perspective on the relationship between language and reality is represented. Joyce's famous abandonment of an omniscient authorial voice then, rather than relinquishing the narrative to a Babel of conflicting languages, allows each separate character and scene its own voice. Reflecting a modernist sensibility in his reticence to depict a totalizing vision, Joyce was unable to represent the variability of the world with a single language but required a multiplicity of language styles: "Je suis de l'avis qu'une prononciation personnelle ne m'est plus permise. Je suis contraint à la faire moyennant les scènes et les personages de ma pauvre invention."[32] Thus, although the object world is fragmented into its various specific components, language acts as a unifying force connecting individuals with their world.

In representing language and the styles of English as thematic topic, "Oxen of the Sun" is Joyce's *tour de force*. Here, language, as a structure in organic relation to the human community, is shown in its gestation and development from Anglo-Saxon to contemporary American English. Using a variety of prose styles from the history of English letters, Joyce simultaneously recounts events of pertinence to *Ulysses* as a thematic whole.[33] "Oxen of the Sun" is a virtuoso performance, revealing Joyce's imitative and parodic mastery of language styles diachronically arranged and his creative genius in adapting them to the needs of his plot. In terms of the content of Joyce's linguistic experimentation, however, it is the language of the characters and scenes which have the greatest implications for the structure of the novel form. For it is through characterization that Joyce represents the language of specific individuals and their communities. As a whole, *Ulysses* uses language to represent the various communal, ideological and generic voices of the modernist era. In this process, *Ulysses* as a single example of a novel approaches Bakhtin's prescription, quoted in chapter two, for the novel as a genre: "...the novel must represent all the social and ideological voices of its era, ... the novel must be a microcosm of heteroglossia."

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[32] *Letters I, op. cit.*, 118.

[33] See J.S. Atherton, "The Oxen of the Sun" in C. Hart and D. Hayman eds., *op. cit.*, who states: "This chapter is an exercise in imitative form. Joyce is trying to make words reproduce objects and processes" 313. In

Unlike Gorky's *Mother*, which represented the language of Bolshevik ideology in all of its characters, Leopold Bloom, Stephen Dedalus and Molly Bloom of *Ulysses* each has a voice appropriate to his or her character and perspective on the surrounding world. Furthermore, Mr. Deasy speaks of a Tory vision of history, the "Citizen" bellows Fenian chauvinism, the assembled literati of "Scylla and Charybdis" pontificate in their various ways on aestheticism and culture while Gerty

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particular Atherton isolates five processes: 1. A series of imitations showing the development of English. 2. A continuation of Joyce's Homeric parallels. 3. A treatment of the growth of the human foetus. 4. An outline of 'faunal evolution.' 5. A linking with earlier parts of *Ulysses*" 315.

MacDowell of "Nausicaa" swoons in the rhetorical heights of romance fiction. Each is the "image of a language" and thereby the communal ideology represented in language. In this, Joyce takes the referential properties inherent in the novel's use of language to their limits. Joyce's discernibly modernist genius, however, was to mix with this referential use of language a self-conscious awareness of the use of language as poetic medium. Language is used in *Ulysses* to represent ideologies; but just as importantly the manner in which language is used, the differing generic conventions employed and parodied, indicates that the structure of language use conditions the referential function of language. The genre of linguistic representation to some extent conditions the perception of the object-world represented.

"Nausicaa" contains an excellent example of this form of modernist linguistic self-cognizance. In this chapter the "objective" language of narration and the voice of Gerty MacDowell's interior thoughts share the same vocabulary derived from the conventions of popular romance fiction. Joyce's mastery in capturing the affective power of genre, even in parody, deserves lengthy quotation. Thus a description of Gerty:

> There was an innate refinement, a languid queenly *hauteur* about Gerty which was unmistakably evidenced in her delicate hands and higharched instep. Had kind fate but willed her to be born a gentlewoman of high degree in her own right and had she only received the benefit of a good education Gerty MacDowell might easily have held her own beside any lady in the land and have seen herself

> exquisitely gowned with jewels on her brow and patrician suitors at her feet vying with one another to pay their devoirs to her. Mayhap it was this, the love that might have been, that lent to her softlyfeatured face at whiles a look, tense with suppressed meaning, that imparted a strange yearning tendency to the beautiful eyes, a charm few could resist. (286)

The following is Gerty's account of the mysterious "foreigner" gazing at her:

> Yes, it was her he was looking at, and there was meaning in his look. His eyes burned into her as though they would search her through and through, read her very soul. Wonderful eyes they were, superbly expressive, but could you trust them? People were so queer. She could see at once by his dark eyes and his pale intellectual face that he was a foreigner, the image of the photo she had of Martin Harvey, the matinee idol, only for the moustache which she preferred because she wasn't stagestruck like Winny Rippingham that wanted the two to always dress the same on account of a play but she could not see whether he had an aquiline nose or a slightly *retrousse* from where he was sitting. He was in deep mourning, she could see that, and the story of a haunting sorrow was written on his face. ... Here was that of which she had so often dreamed. It was he who mattered and there was joy on her face because she wanted him because she felt instinctively that he was like no-one else. The very heart of the girlwoman went out to him, her dreamhusband, because she knew on the instant it was him. If he had suffered, more sinned against than sinning, or even, even, if he had been himself a sinner, a wicked man, she cared not. Even if he was a protestant or methodist she could convert him easily if he truly loved her. There were wounds that wanted healing with heartbalm. (293)

Here, the reader is aware of Bloom's actual masturbatory labours while Gerty's perceptual language colours their reality. In this instance the reader perceives the irony, the disjunction between appearances derived from romance conventions and reality. Later on however, the reader is made to realize that he or she is subject to the same form of misunderstanding occasioned by language's deceptive powers as he or she realizes that Gerty herself is not the idealized figure the conventions of romance assume:

> Slowly, without looking back she went down the uneven strand to Cissy, to Edy, to Jacky and Tommy Caffrey, to little baby Boardman. It was darker now and there were stones and bits of wood on the strand and slippy seaweed. She walked with a certain quiet dignity characteristic of her but with care and very slowly because--because Gerty MacDowell was ...
>
> Tight boots? No. She's lame! O!
>
> Mr. Bloom watched her as she limped away. Poor girl! That's why she's left on the shelf and the others did a sprint. Thought something was wrong by the cut of her jib. Jilted beauty. A defect is ten times worse in a woman. But makes them polite. Glad I didn't know it when she was on show. Hot little devil all the same. I wouldn't mind. (301)

Significantly, with the shift of perspective from Gerty to Bloom which this single scene brings, there is a shift of linguistic tone. Gerty's language emphasizes the sentimental within romance conventions; Bloom's is that of the pornographic.[34] For, as we know from "Wandering Rocks," Bloom himself has a taste for the sexually suggestive language of soft-core pornography. In either instance, language is revealed not simply to refer to the world but also to effect the perception of it.

"Nausicaa" indicates Joyce's self-conscious awareness of language's referential power within generic structure in the specific example of romance fiction. *Ulysses* incorporates other non-fictionally generic conventions, as well however. "Aeolus," for instance, employs the language signs of journalism while "Ithaca" is an encyclopedic, empiricist accumulation of fact. The cumulative effect of Joyce's use of specific genres to turn reality into fiction and fiction into reality is, at each turn, to provide a new perspectives and strategies of understanding of reality. In performing this feat, Joyce both required and transformed the novel form. Required, as the novel's epic wholeness contains the multitude of character perspectives, subject matters and accompanying ideologies which other genres are not able to sustain. Transformed, for in self-consciously utilizing the novel's generic flexibility, Joyce's *Ulysses* made visible the functional capabilities of the novel in a manner which, as the next chapter will reveal, has invited further experimentation. Furthermore, as Joyce's aggregate use of time, space, plot, character and language solidified the nascent formal vocabulary of modernism, his use and modification of the generic capabilities of the novel helped to articulate the cultural and aesthetic conditions of his age and provided literature with a means of expressing the reality of modernity. In this respect, Joyce's *Ulysses* provides a model of fictional order in a world of fragmentation. Such was the effect of *Ulysses* and a product of the novel's inherent connectedness with reality.

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[34] See Leslie Fiedler, "To Whom Does Joyce Belong? *Ulysses* as Parody, Pop and Porn," in Heyward Ehrlich ed., *Light Rays: James Joyce and Modernism*, (New York: New Horizon Press, 1984) 34.

Chapter 6

Gravity's Rainbow and the Novel of the Postmodern Zone

With Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow,* this study returns to its beginnings. For Pynchon's is the form of writing largely responsible for prompting a comprehensive account of the representational qualities of the twentieth-century novel. Even the most superficial reading of a novel such as *Gravity's Rainbow* confronts the reader with a new variant of the aesthetic relationship between literature and reality. Established conventions are challenged. In challenging the existing formulas for novel writing, the postmodern novel quantitatively extends the limits of the literary representation of reality and outstrips the ability of mimesis, conventionally understood, to account for literature's ties to reality. Writers such as Pynchon, Barthelme, Brautigan and others have raised the possibility of establishing a qualitatively new form of representation, one which seemingly refers not to external reality but self-referentially to the linguistic system. The possibility of a qualitatively new orientation for representation in the novel raises obvious questions concerning the relationship between literature and reality. The premise of this study has been that such questions could best be investigated through a retrospective account of representation in the novel form, from a period of realism, and the perhaps naive assurance of the mimetic possibilities of the novel, through the alterations of socialist realism and modernism to return to postmodernism itself.

Historically, *Gravity's Rainbow* is the most recent in this study's chronology of novels and is, as may be expected, significantly different in form and function from either Gorky's *Mother* or Joyce's *Ulysses*. For reasons of its exceptional contrastive features alone, *Gravity's Rainbow* would constitute an excellent novel with which to examine the specificity of representation in the postmodern novel.[1] Apart from illustrating the differences of the postmodern novel from the previous forms examined in this study, however, there are specific features which recommend *Gravity's Rainbow* to any inquiry of representation in the twentieth-century novel.

In direct succession to James Joyce's *Ulysses* of the previous chapter, *Gravity's Rainbow* provides a measure of critical coherence. *Gravity's Rainbow*, since its publication in 1973, has drawn comparisons to *Ulysses* in both reviews and scholarly treatment.[2] Historically, it is also a novel which treats wartime and post-war Europe in a textual manner following upon Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake*, the text which in its form and publication date of 1939 marked the culmination of the type of literary and social development of Anglo-American modernism exemplified in *Ulysses*. *Gravity's Rainbow* also provides this study scope in its significant contrasts, as a literary phenomena, with *Ulysses*. Consistent with the principle of literary history outlined in chapter three, the study of *Ulysses'* relation to its social and cultural horizon had recourse to a recreation of Joyce's authorial intentions as well as an evaluation of *Ulysses* within the context of the corpus of Western literature and in particular the central text of Homer's *Odyssey*. With the example of *Gravity's Rainbow* such conditions do not prevail, ensuring a particularly postmodern exception to the methodology pursued in the previous chapters. In seeming affirmation of Roland Barthes' "The Death of the Author," Pynchon, without having died, has disappeared leaving only the reader, text and the literary process:

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[1] See, for instance, Brian McHale, "Modernist Reading, Post-Modern Text: The Case of *Gravity's Rainbow*," *Poetics Today*, 1.1/2 (1979): 85-109.

[2] See, for instance, David Thornburn, "A Dissent on Pynchon," *Commentary* 56 (September) 1973: 68-70 and Edward Mendelson, "Gravity's Encyclopedia" in *Mindful Pleasures: Essays on Thomas Pynchon*, eds. G. Levine and D. Leverenz, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1976): 161-96 and especially Tony Tanner *Thomas Pynchon*, (Metheun: London and New York, 1982), 75: "Pynchon has created a book that is both one of the great historical novels of our time and arguably the most important literary text since *Ulysses*."

> ....a text is made up of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not, as was hitherto said, the author. The reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination...the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the author.[3]

Although there exists a limited amount of biographical information concerning Pynchon, it is of little value in understanding his work.[4] Pynchon has, in a manner rare in modern letters, successfully distanced himself from his oeuvre as an intending author. Thus, instead of resorting to external sources of knowledge in the process of establishing interpretive meaning, the reader is left with a world of words which refuses to accord preferred status to the category of either the factual or fictional. This condition has significant and telling ramifications for the study of the postmodern novel. Pynchon's text by its very configuration as cultural object isolated in a purely textual setting will require strategies of interpretive approach different from that applied to either *Mother* or *Ulysses*.

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[3] Quoted in Tanner *op. cit.* 11.

Finally *Gravity's Rainbow* is also an appropriate text for this study for social and historical reasons. As a canonized "classic" of contemporary American literature, *Gravity's Rainbow* provides this study with an example of a novel from the cultural setting most commonly identified with postmodernism. Furthermore, as a novel of conscious historical specificity, *Gravity's Rainbow* conforms to the requirements of this study thematically in its depiction of history and historical events and logistically in its own historical position relative to the other novels of this study. Thematically, as the central fictionalized events of *Gravity's Rainbow* take place in 1944-45 in the context of the Second World War, Pynchon's novel invites speculation concerning the formulative importance of that event in influencing the socio-cultural developments which followed it. Published in 1973, Pynchon's novel is the most contemporary of those examined in this study and concludes the literary-historical lineage begun in nineteenth-century realism. Given this particular configuration of features, then, *Gravity's Rainbow* conforms to the requirements of this study both as novel and as socio-historical object. The examination of *Gravity's Rainbow* according to its manipulation of time, space, character, plot and language will thus extend this study into the postmodern era and illuminate the transformations of the novel in a new socio-cultural setting and its bid to maintain the representation of reality.

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[4] While unessential to an understanding of Pynchon's work, the biographical information contained in those studies of Pynchon's life and extended family are of lateral interest as sources for numerous themes and events which crop up in his novels and short stories. See Mathew Winston, "The Quest for Thomas Pynchon" in G. Levine and D. Levenz, eds. *op. cit.* 251-64 and "Introduction," in *Approaches to Gravity's Rainbow*, ed., C. Clerc, (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1983): 3-30.

It has already been observed that in the case of *Gravity's Rainbow* access to even tentatively constructed authorial intentions has been denied and that in a fittingly postmodern gesture, the reader is left by this constructed absence with but a world of words. Given this novel's indeterminant ontological status between categories of fiction and reality, a brief discussion of the concept of postmodern will prove useful not simply as a means of understanding this individual novel, but in understanding its place in a larger cultural corpus and the development of the novel form in the twentieth-century. In terms of the principles of literary history outlined in chapter three, this discussion will invoke a description of the socio-cultural context of *Gravity's Rainbow* as well the specifically literary environment of the novel. As in the instance of *Ulysses* and modernism discussed in the previous chapter, however, the configuration of a socio-cultural concept cast in historical terms and based on literary texts is not an unproblematic undertaking. Indeed the difficulties encountered in discussing modernism as both a historical and cultural concept are augmented in the case of postmodernism. Etymologically, with the prefix "post," postmodernism is *de facto* posited in historical terms, to assume a rationale of temporal development although the concept is still being defined in response to contemporary cultural events. The very expression of "postmodernity" and the continued discussion of it assumes the logic of historical development without the necessary condition of historical perspective which would permit it. Nonetheless, and despite this fundamental contradiction, postmodernism is a cultural concept with the value which comes of use and circulation. Whether inflated or counterfeit, it is a currency in circulation and needs to be accorded the value of its widespread tender. Widespread tender indeed. There is certainly no shortage of theories and descriptions of postmodernism, each with an urgency of expression which seems to stem from the contemporaneity of the concept and the need to employ it as a means of explaining contemporary reality. As with modernism and modernity, the concept of postmodernism carries with its descriptive and evaluative function a periodizing role contained in the related term postmodernity. Given the number of theories concerning postmodernism and postmodernity and the logistical problems inherent in isolating the uses of a term so widely used, a specifically defined approach is required. Although the strategy chosen here can in no way claim comprehensiveness, it is hoped that a return to the initial uses of the term "postmodern" will repay the effort by serving to provide a context for the evolving uses and roles designated to the term. In doing so, an attempt will be made to isolate the specific qualities of this form of cultural expression and relate it to a definite cultural-historical environment.[5]

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[5] The following brief account of the historical development of the term postmodernism is indebted especially to *Postmodern Theory: Critical Interrogations*, eds., Steven Best and Douglas Kellner, (Houndmills: MacMillan, 1991), Hans Bertens, "The Postmodern *Weltanschauung* and its Relation with Modernism: An Introductory Survey," in *Approaching Postmodernism*, eds., Douwe Fokkema and Hans Bertens, (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1986): 9-52 and Michael Köhler, "'Postmodernismus:' Ein begriffsgeschichtlicher Überblick," in *Postmodernism in American Literature*, eds., Manfred Pütz and Peter Freese, (Darmstadt: Thesen Verlag, 1984): 1-11.

1. Representations of Postmodernity:

Apart from isolated instances of usage in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century, the term postmodernism received its first general articulation and significant dissemination in Volumes VIII and IX of Arnold Toynbee's *A Study of History* of 1954. Toynbee identified the "post-Modern age" as a fourth stage in the development of Western history, a period beginning around 1875 and marking a transition from the Modern age which was dated 1475-1875. Although Toynbee identified the postmodern age within a grand narrative of history traversing four ages and would thus contradict later characterizations of the postmodern, he did describe the age as one of relativism and revolution, of the abandonment of rationalism and the goals of the Enlightenment.[6] Toynbee's characterization of the social and cultural chaos of the age is undoubtedly a reflection of the economic and national-military cataclysms identified in our previous chapter as modernism, a period of intensification in the longer process of modernity. In the 1950s, primarily in the United States, Toynbee's notion of a particular postmodern era was adapted to various studies of cultural and social life in mass, postindustrial society.[7] As Steven Best and Douglas Kellner indicate, however, these studies, along with Toynbee's, describe the new era in sweeping sociological terms which extend out of an essentially modernist paradigm of historical development rather than positing a conceptual shift in social and cultural theory (8).

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[6] Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*, Volumes VIII and IX, (London: Oxford University Press, 1954). See especially chapter 12 of Volume IX, "The Prospects of the Western Civilization." Given the relationship between the technology of war and postmodernism to be discussed in *Gravity's Rainbow* the following quote from Toynbee is particularly *apropos*: "Even if the uranium atom bomb should fail to produce the same morally devastating effect on these two loose-limbed giants [the Soviet Union and the United States] as it had produced on a congested and exhausted Japan, an inconscionable post-Modern Western Science still had up her sleeve a hydrogen atom bomb that could be guaranteed, if ever detonated, to blow even a United States or Soviet Union out of the water--at the cost, perhaps, of making the whole face of the Planet uninhabitable by human or any other living organisms" (408).

In the early 1960s postmodernism was first distinguished in specifically cultural terms and identified on the basis of a perceived disruption from the norms of modernism. Critics such as Irving Howe and Harry Levin interpreted the evidence of changing cultural norms in a negative manner while Susan Sontag, Leslie Fiedler and Ihab Hassan welcomed the presumed liberating tendencies of the "new sensibility." Thus, until the 1980s and the effect of a poststructuralist critique of the study of culture, the concept of the postmodern existed in two central formations--the socio-historical and the cultural--with each formation maintained by proponents and detractors. Whether to be applauded or lamented, a sense of disruption from modernism, dating from approximately 1939, was common to all. The late 1970s and the 1980s witnessed an explosion of approaches to the identification and explanation of this disruption in the cultural sphere--the postmodern debate. It will not be possible to discuss at length specific positions in this vital and at times arcane debate. Rather, some general observations will be derived from prominent voices in the debate made before turning to a specifically descriptive assessment of postmodernism. With this understanding of postmodernism it will be possible to approach *Gravity's Rainbow* as a model with which to register the implications of postmodernism for the representational function of the novel.

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[7] See Bernard Rosenberg, *Mass Culture: The Popular Arts in America*, (Glencoe: Free Press, 1957), Peter Drucker, *The Landmarks of Tomorrow*, (New York: Harper, 1959), C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959) and Geoffrey Barraclough, *An Introduction to Contemporary History*, (New York: Basic Books, 1964).

Frederic Jameson, in emphasizing the relatedness of aesthetic perceptions of the postmodern to particular ideological positions, affirms the relation between understandings of postmodernism and correlating conceptions of history and judgements of contemporary culture.[8] Jameson divides approaches to postmodernism into two central categories. The first category, which accepts the premise of a historical break between the modern and the postmodern, is characterized on one side by an anti-modernist affirmation of the postmodern and on the other by a rejection of postmodernism in favour of the values of modernism (56-59). The second category denies the presence of a historical fissure between modernism and postmodernism and offers two conflicting interpretations of modernism. In one instance, this strategy promotes the rejuvenating possibilities of modernism while the other castigates the increased degeneration of culture begun in modernism and continued in contemporary times (59-61). Jameson's classificatory approach to positions on the postmodern, based as it is on a historical understanding of the issue, lends itself to the interpretation of a broad range of social and artistic forms of expression--from postmodernism's socio-historic effect on the "goals" of the Enlightenment to its expression in architecture.

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[8] See particularly "Theories of the Postmodern," chapter 2 in *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991): 55-66.

Susan Rubin Suleiman, in confining her survey of approaches to postmodernism to the literary sphere, distinguishes three primary "motives" in defining postmodernism in opposition to modernism: "The first may be called evaluative/ideological; the second diagnostic; and the third, classificatory/analytical"[9] Ultimately, Suleiman faults representative positions of each "motive" because they are derived from an arbitrary and ossified notion of "modernism" against which postmodernism is placed. Suleiman, then, rejects the establishment of an "opposition" between categories as loosely defined--historically and formally--as modernism and postmodernism. Instead she intimates a method which would account for differences in types of literature which would not be based on a crude modernist/postmodernist opposition:

> Does this mean that we should consider all of modern writing as a single category, from Lautréamont to John Barth? Well, why not? By all means let us find types and strands and brands and various lineages within modern (or even, if we

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[9] Susan Rubin Suleiman, "Naming and Difference: Reflections on 'Modernism versus Postmodernism' in Literature," in Douwe Fokkema and Hans Bertens, eds., *op. cit*: 257.

> must, Modern*ist*) writing--but not Modernists *versus* Postmodernists. (266)

One sympathizes with Suleiman's desire to avoid inaccuracies of classification associated with such all-encompassing terms as modernism and postmodernism. Nonetheless, her strategy of replacing categories of modernism and postmodernism with "strands and brands and various lineages" is to avoid rather than clarify the problem; ultimately, the designation of classifications such as modernism and postmodernism is an attempt to find "various lineages." Suleiman is correct, however, in rejecting a historically based opposition between modernism and postmodernism when the historicism of the terms is itself undefined and indeed undefinable because unconnected to any process of historical development external to the literary system. What is at issue then, is not the existence of such terms which help to categorize observed trends in culture and forms of artistic representation, but the legitimacy of the means of positing them. Reference to the formal features of a previous movement is, in itself, insufficient to distinguish postmodernism, although numerous prominent critics of postmodernism have adopted this strategy.[10]

Matei Calinescu has isolated the problem of defining postmodernism as a particular example of a larger problem in periodization which has arisen as a result of a general process of substituting historical models for change with textual analysis:

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[10] See Ihab Hassan, "POSTmodernISM: A Paracritical Bibliography," reprinted in M. Pütz and P. Freese, eds., *op. cit*: 82-94, David Lodge, *The Modes of Modern Writing: Metaphor, Metonymy and the Typology of Modern Literature*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), Frederic Jameson, *op. cit.*, Jürgen Habermas, "Modernity versus Postmodernity," *New German Critique* 22 (1981): 3-14 among others.

> For some time, in reaction against both historical positivism and historical determinism, literary studies in the West chose to ignore the question of change as far as possible. The result was the emergence of a whole array of methods of textual analysis, which clearly privileged such notions as "structure," "synchrony," and "*intra*textual relationships." The *intra*textual model was applied to the whole of literature, which appeared as a huge text, individual works being treated as mere parts of a larger system, a system within which the question of difference could be solved in terms of binary oppositions. Change was recognized only insofar as it could be seen as *internal* to the system or the generalized text, and then explained as just another type of binary opposition: modern versus ancient, the new versus the old.[11]

It is as a means of avoiding the methodological snares enumerated by Calinescu and witnessed in Suleiman that this study emphasizes the connectedness of literature to external, historically developing reality. Accordingly, the articulation of a critical construct of postmodernism must recognize that literature as a system and individual writers respond not solely to preceding modes of writing but also to external socio-historic and socio-cultural conditions which contribute in determining the modes of writing. Change in the literary system is motivated by changes in the literature's social environment as well as according to forces internal to the system of literature.

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[11] Matei Calinescu, "Postmodernism and Some Paradoxes of Periodization," in eds., D. Fokkema and H. Bertens, *op. cit.*, 250.

Brian McHale's development of the concept of a dominant, discussed in the previous chapter, offers a strategy for distinguishing the formal and thematic conventions central to much fiction of the latter half of the twentieth century.[12] Identification of a changed dominant in postmodernist fiction from that of a modernist one does not presume a reaction of the former against the latter but rather a difference of representational emphasis which may be correlated to historical developments. Indeed it is the dominant which is responsive to external social and historical forces. In the fiction of the postwar period, McHale identifies a dominant which emphasizes issues concerning the nature of being:

> ...the dominant of postmodernist fiction is *ontological*. That is, postmodernist fiction deploys strategies which engage and foreground questions like the ones Dick Higgins calls "post-cognitive:" "Which world is this? What is to be done in it? Which of my selves is to do it?" Other typical postmodernist questions bear either on the ontology of the literary text itself or on the ontology of the world which it projects.... (10)

With the concept of a dominant, it is possible to identify those core features which constitute the familial characteristics of fiction which foregrounds ontological issues. These features may be grouped as tools of analysis rather than prescription, intended for use in classification rather than in the difficult task of isolating causal sources for what are diverse social and cultural phenomena.[13] Emphasis on the dominant also provides a response to those positions which deny the historical and social exclusivity of postmodernism by isolating postmodernist characteristics in previous forms of cultural expression.[14] Viewed from a sufficiently high level of abstraction it is possible to find aspects of the postmodern in the romantic movement, Cervantes' *Don Quixote* or Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* to cite common examples. Nontheless, although it is occasionally possible to isolate lone features of "postmodernism" in individual works, it is difficult to demonstrate the centrality or continuity of the code these features represent to the individual work as a whole across the movement or within varying forms of cultural expression. The concept of the dominant provides a means of identifying the predominant characteristics of the code predominating within a period or culture.

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[12] Brian McHale, *Postmodernist Fiction*, (Metheun: New York and London, 1987): 6-11.

Several prominent critics of postmodernism have identified a nucleus of features and characteristics of the postmodern code which correspond to an ontological dominant. Ihab Hassan has catalogued a series of seven modernist headings--urbanism, technologism, "dehumanization," primitivism, eroticism, antinomianism, experimentalism--and indicated the ways in which postmodernist forms of representation have extended and superseded them.[15] Hassan's gesture is not intended to compare modernism and postmodernism, but rather to contrast, to indicate the changed strategies employed to represent a changed postmodern reality.

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[13] Jameson's attempt to locate the source of postmodernism in the cultural logic of late capitalism is one such example of the difficult task of isolating the causal origins of such a wide ranging phenomena as postmodernism. F. Jameson, "Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," *New Left Review*, 46 (1984): 53-93.

[14] See Gerald Graff, for instance, in "The Myth of the Postmodern Breakthrough," *Triquarterly* 26 (1973): 383-417.

> Postmodernism may be a response, direct or oblique, to the Unimaginable which Modernism glimpsed only in its most prophetic moments. Certainly it is not the Dehumanization of the Arts that concerns us now; it is rather the Denaturalization of the Planet and the End of Man. We are, I believe, inhabitants of another Time and another Space, and *we no longer know what response is adequate to our reality.* (Emphasis mine, 91)

Douwe Fokkema has also identified a core of identifying compositional features of the postmodern code which has dominated Western literature since the 1950s.[16] According to the code delineated by Fokkema, the relationship between text and author is relaxed in order to emphasize inclusivity and randomness even if at the expense of textual coherence. Concerning the text and its social context, the postmodern code abandons the attempt to explain reality rationally, opting instead for variant models of explanation founded on words and the power of language to create competing realities. Thus, according to Fokkema, texts of the postmodern code emphasize their identity as semantic constructs and not primarily or even necessarily as representations of external events. Finally, the relationship between reader and text, as a function of the role of the reader, is exceptionally indeterminate, "democratic" according to the postmodern code. No prior sanctioned meaning is assured in postmodern texts, allowing and requiring readers to formulate interpretive meaning according to their own experience of the text.

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[15] Ihab Hassan, "POSTmodernISM: A Paracritical Bibliography," in eds., M Pütz and P. Freese, *op. cit.*, 92-94.

[16] Douwe Fokkema, "Postmodernist Impossibilities: Literary conventions in Borges, Barthelme, Robbe-Grillet, Hermans, and Others," chapter 2 in *Literary History, Modernism and Postmodernism*, (Amsterdam: John Benjamins: 1984): 37-56.

There are, of course, other competing typologies of the postmodern aesthetic which, according to their own logic, overlap with and augment the above two represented examples. The typologies of Hassan and Fokkema, although formulated in relation to modernism, provide examples of a means to distinguish the specific nature of postmodernism's representation of contemporary reality. For, as Douwe Fokkema indicates, although the postmodern code resists the explicit explanation of reality its form and subjects of representation and the social and philosophical issues which they raise are expressive of conditions in the contemporary world:

> ...the sociocode of Postmodernism is based on a preference for nonselection or quasi-nonselection, on a rejection of discriminating hierarchies, and a refusal to distinguish between truth and fiction, past and present, relevant and irrelevant. Yet, as a code it has contributed to texts that as a result of their discussions of basic philosophical problems, such as the nature of causality, or morality, or evolution, or time, or infinity, are highly relevant to contemporary thought. (42)

Postmodernism, then, is an aesthetic of an ontological dominant, expressive of a crisis in the legitimation of forms of knowledge in the post-war period. As the central feature of the postmodern aesthetic and its socio-historic environment, the crisis of legitimation may be expected to be represented in both the form and content of the novel. Before moving to Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow* as a representative text, however, the applicability of the very structuring, conceptual category of genre must be explored in a postmodern context. In the previous chapter, in the instance of modernism and *Ulysses*, Joyce's novel and the conditions inherent in this socio-cultural environment of modernism were seen to have raised the issue not of the conceptual applicability of generic categories but of the legitimacy of a specific genre, the novel. In the present context of postmodernism, which has been identified as the aesthetic expression of a crisis in the legitimacy of forms of knowledge, conceptual categories or forms of knowing such as genre are also brought into question.

Jean Francois Lyotard provides the excellent example of an approach to postmodernism which implicitly subverts the preconditions for genre by positing radically new conditions of knowing in the postmodern age.[17] Lyotard's notion of the breakdown of traditionally maintained conventions for understanding the world, the erasure of the "grand narratives" of Western thought and their explanatory power and cohesive authority has implications not simply on the level of the ontological condition of knowledge but for the practical issues of attempting the communication of any form of knowledge. Genres, as transhistorical forms of expressing knowledge, are part of, and implicated in the explosion of, the grand narratives of the Western tradition. Appropriately, Lyotard identifies the postmodern artist according to his or her position at the very heart of this paradox, presenting the unpresentable in representation:

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[17] J.F. Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, tran., G. Bennington and B. Massumi, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

> The postmodern would be that which, in the modern, puts forward the unpresentable in presentation itself; that which denies itself the solace of good forms, the consensus of a taste which would make it possible to share collectively the nostalgia for the unattainable; that which searches for new presentations not in order to enjoy them but in order to impart a stronger sense of the unpresentable. A postmodern artist or writer is in the position of a philosopher: the text he writes, the work he produces are not in principle governed by preestablished rules, and they cannot be judged according to a determining judgement, by applying familiarcategories to the text or to the work. Those rules and categories are what the work of art itself is looking for. The artist and the writer, then, are working without rules in order to formulate the rules of what *will have been done*.[18]

The ramifications for genre are quite clear. How is it possible to posit a structure such as the "postmodern novel" when such a structure is said not to exist as a set of rules, indeed when the artist is axiomatically one who denies "the solace of good forms?"[19] The use of such terms as "text,"

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[18] Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, tran. G.Bennington and B. Massumi, Theory and History of Literature, Volume 10, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984): p. 81.

[19] Interestingly, Lyotard doesn't pose this question for himself while in the act of writing a "report" on knowledge. Ihab Hassan does, implicitly; hence the mixed "form" of his critical essays.

"écriture" or simply narrative is one means of avoiding the hierarchical and classificatory authority which generic terms seem to exert. Ultimately, this is little more than a tactical sleight of hand, however, for these terms themselves become freighted with classificatory function.[20]

One aspect of the postmodern code--that of the self legitimation of forms of knowledge--could be invoked to suggest that if "novels," even postmodern ones, are said to exist and the critical term is used, then they exist. Such would be a fitting postmodern approach to the problem. This study has chosen to address the issue by concentrating on the descriptive uses categories of genre represent rather than the prescriptive, regulatory power of genre. Genres are recognizable and repeatable systems of organizing information and knowledge which may be distinguishable as much through permutations as consistency. Ultimately they are indispensable to the analysis of forms of writing in a historical context where change and continuity are observed whether across an age or period or within a single text. Simply put, genres provide a means, not a limit, to understanding.

In the postmodern world, where ontological uncertainty is a condition of life, genres provide the structures with which to project at least provisional accounts of reality. In like manner, the characters of Thomas Pynchon's novels, Stencil of

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[20] Ralph Cohen, "Do Postmodern Genres Exist?" in *Postmodern Genres*, ed., Marjorie Perloff, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988): 13.

V, Oedipa Mass--"Shall I project a world"--and not the least Tyrone Slothrop of *Gravity's Rainbow* continually return to imperfect structures of explaining their worlds which may be false but which, nonetheless, can not be abandoned. Such is the value of genre in the world as it is. Structures of meaning like the novel, *pace* Tanner, replicate and facilitate our experience of the attempt to understand the world:

> I think it is important to stress that the novel provides an exemplary experience in modern reading. The reader does not move comfortably from some ideal "emptiness" of meaning to a satisfying fullness, but instead becomes involved in a process in which any perception can precipitate a new confusion, and an apparent clarification turn into a prelude to further difficulties. So far from this being an obstacle to appreciating the book, it is part of its essence. It is the way we live now. (75)

Gravity's Rainbow, though it will be treated here as a representative novel of postmodernism, is not universally recognized as a novel. Alfred MacAdam, for instance, finds that the word novel "seems devoid of meaning" and goes so far as to suggest that "for literary criticism...the term has become an embarrassment."[21] For MacAdam, *Gravity's Rainbow* is disqualified as a novel on the basis of its use of character and plot and argues for the generic designation of satire. MacAdam's understanding of the proper novelistic structuring of character and plot, while imperfectly articulated, seems heavily based on the model of the nineteenth-century realist novel. Alternatively, Edward Mendelson identifies *Gravity's*

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[21] "Pynchon as Satirist," *Yale Review*, 67 (1978): 555-66.

Rainbow as a representative "encyclopedic narrative": "the most important single genre in Western literature of the Renaissance and after [although] it has never been identified" (161). *Gravity's Rainbow* thus takes its place with Dante's *Commedia*, Rabelais' books of Gargantua and Pantagruel, Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, Goethe's *Faust*, Melville's *Moby Dick* and Joyce's *Ulysses*. Rather than disproving the applicability of the novel to *Gravity's Rainbow*, however, Mendelson provides *Gravity's Rainbow* a place in this "genre" by reductively defining the novel--"a narrative of individuals and their social and psychological relations" (161)--and by describing "encyclopedic narrative" according to features subsumable in this study's account of the novel:

> Encyclopedic narratives attempt to render the full range of knowledge and beliefs of a national culture, while identifying the ideological perspectives from which that culture shapes and interprets its knowledge. (162)

Passing over reference to a specific national culture and avoiding the vagaries of generic terminology, Mendelson's account indicates precisely the representational quality of this type of writing which will be identified in greater detail below as a novel of the postmodern world. Thus, rather than responding directly to these discussions of the novel and the designation of *Gravity's Rainbow* as a novel, the remainder of this chapter will be devoted to demonstrating an example of how the novel form, rather than being ahistorically mired in a specific form of representation, alters its utilization of novelistic components better to represent its changing external reality.

2. *Gravity's Rainbow*: Representation in the Postmodern Zone:

In isolating the novel's particular representation of time, it was observed in chapter 2 that the novel depicts time as temporal process and not as an unchanging category. In the postmodern novel, the representation of time retains this dynamic character. Rather than confirming the unfolding of an ideologically informed vision of history, as in the socialist realist novel *Mother*, or the formulation of a historically based sense of understanding founded on subjectively experienced rhythms of time, as in *Ulysses*, *Gravity's Rainbow* radically problematizes the individual relation to time and the collective experience of time as history. As a postmodern novel, the representational configuration of *Gravity's Rainbow* questions the ontological underpinnings of time and history.

Elizabeth Ermarth has recently argued that postmodernism subverts the fundamental, traditional construction of time and history.[22] While it is difficult to concur with all of her claims concerning "discourse in the Post-Renaissance, post-Reformation, and post-Enlightenment West" (6) or even to situate the historical and cultural boundaries of her conception of the postmodern, Ermarth is certainly correct in identifying the postmodern challenge to the Western meta-narrative of history. The passing of time, in a postmodern socio-cultural environment, can no longer be validated by an encompassing ideology with regard to its development or teleology. Time can not be rendered accountable even to an individual conception of it. As a temporal sequence of events, time, of course, still exists. In a postmodern context, however, the conditions necessary for the contemplation, interpretation and utilization of an understanding of time as history are no longer present. Instead, history and time are experienced without the permanent conceptual structures necessary for understanding them.

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[22] Elizabeth Deeds Ermarth, *Sequel to History*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

The postmodern novel represents this contemporary understanding of time and history. For the postmodern novel, as with the novel in general, signals its representation of external reality by priorizing the depiction of the reigning elements of the environment of which it is a part. In *Gravity's Rainbow*, the breakdown of any rationale for temporal development and history is represented in the novel's narrative use of time and the thematization of history.

"A screaming comes across the sky."[23] *Gravity's Rainbow* begins in time, in the present tense depiction of a rocket streaking across the sky to bring its payload of death and, in narrative terms, a conclusion, for the novel will end with the launching of another rocket. In its temporally ordained flight through the novel, approximately one year of time from September 1944 to early autumn 1945 is recounted with numerous analepses of various dates and a prolepsis to Nixon's America of approximately 1970.[24] The rocket, a central image throughout *Gravity's Rainbow*, metaphorically informs the novel's conception of time in a culture changed by war and rockets. *Gravity's Rainbow* represents reality in its inclusivity from an ever developing present moment. This progression of time, however, has no teleological informed structure of progression and causal development. In *Gravity's Rainbow* the abandonment of time subjects reality, like the rocket, to chance and contingency:

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[23] Thomas Pynchon, *Gravity's Rainbow*, (New York: Bantam, 1973): 3. Hereafter, references to this edition will be made in the text.

> One reason we grew so close to the Rocket, I think, was this sharp awareness of how contingent, like ourselves, the Aggregate 4 could be--how at the mercy of small things.... (422)

Like the rocket, the postmodern time of *Gravity's Rainbow* has a trajectory subject to the gravity of reality--death, in human terms--but one which is unknowable. Indeed it is the rocket which has signalled the destruction of the previous conception of time with its supersonic reversal of temporal causality:

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[24] Khachig Toloyan, "War as Background in *Gravity's Rainbow*" in C. Clerc ed., *op. cit*: 31-68 has provided a detailed chronology and map of the central temporal and physical events of *Gravity's Rainbow*.

> Imagine a missile one hears approaching only *after* it explodes. The reversal! A piece of time neatly snipped out...a few feet of film run backwards...the blast of the rocket, fallen faster than sound--then growing *out* of *it* the roar of its own fall, catching up to what's already death and burning...a ghost in the sky. (55)

Characters who contemplate and understand the implications of death's randomness and the rocket's intrusion into the temporal process, those who voice the urge "to junk cause-and-effect entirely, and strike off at some other angle" (103) are thus appropriately accused of destroying history for an entire generation in the wake of the V2 rocket:

> How can Mexico play, so at his ease, with these symbols of randomness and fright? Innocent as a child, perhaps unaware--perhaps--that in this play he wrecks the elegant rooms of history, threatens the idea of cause and effect itself. What if Mexico's whole *generation* have turned out like this? Will Postwar be nothing but "events," newly created one moment to the next? No links? Is it the end of history? (64-65)

Before following the ramifications to history implicit in the treatment of time in *Gravity's Rainbow*, however, there remains another trait of this novel's narrative use of time which is of generic, familial relation to the novel form. Although *Gravity's Rainbow* narrates events located in the past, the narrative point of temporal departure is predominantly that of the present, as it unfolds and develops. This remains strikingly so in numerous instances of analepses where Pynchon's narrative shifts (imperceptibly in temporal terms) from events unfolding in the present to those in the past. Events are recalled, persona and cultural histories are probed or recast in near temporal, narrative simultaneity. Accordingly, events of the past, narrated as unfolding, are never allowed to solidify into the role of explicit cause of a later effect. Past situations, as with those of the central narrative, are narrated in such a way as to accentuate their apprehension and inconclusivity, their maximal contact to a contemporary reality developing in uncertainty.

The thematization of history in *Gravity's Rainbow*, perhaps more than any other single feature in the novel, foregrounds issues of profound ontological uncertainty. In Pynchon's novel, history, both transnational and personal, is shown to play a central role as an interpretive structure with which to understand the temporal and cultural development of reality. *Gravity's Rainbow* develops two strategies for historically interpreting the reality of Europe in 1945. The first strategy is based on the metaphoric use of paranoia, wherein all events are linked in a grand, unidentifiable though existent pattern or conspiracy. Tyrone Slothrop, in fostering his own paranoic vision of the malignant cabal directing his personal development within international history, isolates the catalytic force of an international cartel responsible for his "conditioning" in childhood experiments and ultimately for prompting the carnage of the second-world war. This paranoic vision of history as a rigid pattern of unidentified cause and horrific effect is commensurate with the teleology of western civilization's History which seems to be advancing through the ideology of capitalism to death:

> Don't forget the real business of the War is buying and selling. The murdering and the violence are self-policing, and can be entrusted to non-professionals. The mass nature of wartime death is useful in many ways. It serves as spectacle, as diversion from the real movements of the War. It provides raw material to be recorded into History, so that children may be taught History as sequences of violence, battle after battle, and be more prepared for the adult world. ... The true war is a celebration of markets. (122)

While adoption of this mythology of history offers the consolation of understanding, a strategy for explaining, if not controlling history, it is fatalistic. Individuals such as Slothrop, Katje Borgesius, Tchitcherine and Enzian as well as being irrevocably anchored in their personal and ancestral pasts are bound to the destruction of their future as surely as a V2 rocket explodes at its programmed target. Thus, History, interpreted as a discernible, causal process, offers a strategy for understanding but assures the acceptance of the entire culture's self destruction.

Gravity's Rainbow provides an alternate vision of history as well. Here, rather than viewing history as a grand paranoiac narrative, it is presented as antiparanoia, a series of contingently arranged events and personal texts unnarrated by any external authorial ideology or rationale. In this response to collective History, *Gravity's Rainbow* posits the postmodern alternative of history conceived plurally. These multiple histories offer representation to those cultural narratives which are unaccepted in official History. Thus, Pynchon's novel provides a voice and history to the preterite of History: the Hereros, Kirghiz, children, homosexuals, etc. of *Gravity's Rainbow*. Indeed, the majority of these preterite seeking respite in their personalized visions are victims of the dominant narrative of western civilization's historical development: "Christian Europe was always death, Karl, death and repression" (369). Unfortunately, however, this strategy of finding history in localized histories can offer no synthesis of understanding or pattern for sustained future repetition and constitutes not simply the death of History but also cultural death. The Otukungurua of *Gravity's Rainbow* exemplify precisely this dilemma. These people of the Herero tribe, devastated by their encounter with European civilization, choose cultural suicide as their response to the determinism seemingly inherent in history:

> It was a simple choice for the Hereros, between two kinds of death: tribal death, or Christian death. Tribal death made sense, Christian death made none at all. ... They calculate no cycles, no returns, they are in love with the glamour of a whole people's suicide--... The Empty Ones can guarantee a day when the last Zone-Herero will die, a final zero to a collective history fully lived. It has appeal. (369-70)

Gravity's Rainbow offers no resolution between these two competing conceptions of history, both of which are presented as defective forms of knowledge. True to the postmodernist novel's representation of reality in its state of ontological doubt, *Gravity's Rainbow* refuses to prescribe a specific conception of history. The novel does, however, describe the conditions of life and the setting of dubious future historical development in the rubble of the bourgeois European order caused by the war and the V2 rocket. At best, given the pervasive distrust of history as it had unfolded and the discrediting of History and histories, *Gravity's Rainbow* recounts the potential for future historical development in a culture levelled of its physical and cultural edifices:

> It seems to Tyrone Slothrop that there might be a route back--maybe that anarchist he met in Zürich was right, maybe for a little while all the fences are down, one road as good as another, the whole space of the Zone cleared, depolarized, and somewhere inside the waste of it a single set of coordinates from which to proceed, without elect, without preterite, without even nationality to fuck it up.... (648)

In this most postmodern of historical moments, where spacial, political and national boundaries have been cleared, *Gravity's Rainbow* glimpses the potential for renewed historical growth. In affirmation of postmodernism's profound uncertainty, however, the narrative never develops this potential in the representation of future reality.

As a postmodern novel, the depiction and use of setting in *Gravity's Rainbow* is directly linked to the novel's generic representation of time and history. The setting of the novel is an integral component of the novel's representation of the generalized socio-cultural reality of Pynchon's postmodern era. Just as the use of time and history is reflective of external setting, so setting, as the element wherein characters interact affectively with their environment, reflects aspects of the novel's cultural place. In relation to time and history, *Gravity's Rainbow* dramatized the implications of the V2 rocket upon the temporally constituted process of cause and effect and consequently for history. The V2 rocket is also shown to have a profoundly affective relationship with the setting of 1944-45 Europe and the entire post-war culture.

As befits a novel of ontological uncertainty, *Gravity's Rainbow* begins not with the description of a physical setting, but with that of a dream. Captain Geoffrey "Pirate" Prentice dreams of the evacuation of London in the wake of previous bombings and in anticipation of future ones. He sees "the fall of a crystal palace," the symbol of bourgeois England, even the cultural and ideological aspirations of the Enlightenment. Rather than a disentanglement from the effects of the bomb, however, the response of an evacuation seems a knotting into, a capitulation to and intensification of the chaos and uncertainty caused by the rocket. Prentice's dream and the ontological insecurity it presages for the postmodern representation of space and setting in *Gravity's Rainbow* is maintained and intensified throughout the novel.

"Forget frontiers now. Forget subdivisions. There aren't any" (342). The setting of *Gravity's Rainbow* ranges significantly from London to Kazakstan geographically and historically from seventeenth-century Mauritius through early twentieth-century south west Africa to Europe in 1945. In each instance, however, the events of the various depicted settings relate to war torn Europe, if not in a physically causal relationship then in western culture's preparation of an ethic acceptance of death. The central setting of the novel, then, is Northern Europe and in particular the "Zone" of the recently capitulated German Third Reich. In its geographic and cultural formlessness, the "Zone" is the postmodern space par excellence. In the Zone, the metaphoric space of Western culture's historical development, all categories of boundary have been broken down. Morally and ethically there are no surviving imperatives in the destructive wake of, for instance, colonialism and the extermination of the Herero people whose "gods had gone away themselves, ... had left the people" (376) or in the shadow of the death camps. Politically and militarily, the zone represents an affront to the victorious allies in the unconquerablity of its formless autonomy:

> 'Its so unorganized out here. There have to be arrangements. You'll find out.' Indeed he will--he'll find thousands of arrangements, for warmth, love, food, simple movement along roads, tracks and canals. Even G-5, living its fantasy of being the only government in Germany now, is just the arrangement for being victorious, is all. No more or less real than all these others so private, silent, and lost to History. (338)

Socially, in terms of national cultural boundaries, the Zone is a sea of peoples displace from their cultural homes by the war. The following is a portion of a virtuoso, single sentence, description of the profound dislocation represented in the Zone. Although long even in its truncated form, this passage merits extended citation:

> The Nationalities are on the move. It is a great frontierless streaming out here. Volksdeutsch from across the Oder, moved out by the Poles and headed for the camp at Rostock, Poles fleeing the Lublin regime, others going back home, the eyes of both parties, when they do meet, hooded behind cheekbones, eyes much older than what's forced them into moving, Estonians, Letts and Lithuanians trekking north again, all their wintry wool in dark bundles, shoes in tatters, songs too hard to sing, talk pointless Sudetens and East Prussians shuttling between Berlin and the DP camps in Mecklenburg, Czechs and Slovaks, Croats and Serbs, Tosks and Ghegs, Macedonians, Magyars, Vlachs, Circassians, Spaniols, Bulgars stirred and streaming over the surface of the Imperial cauldron, colliding, shearing alongside for miles, sliding away, numb, indifferent to all momenta but the deepest, the instability too far below their itchy feet to give a shape to, white wrists and ankles incredibly wasted poking from their striped prison-camp pyjamas, footsteps light as waterfowl's in this inland dust, caravans of Gypsies, axles or linchpins failing, horses dying, families leaving the vehicles beside the roads for others to come live in a night, a day,.... (640)

Most importantly, the Zone is represented itself as an indeterminate spatial category for Tyrone Slothrop, not so much a place with an internal physical or even conceptual geography of its own but rather a spatial metaphor of formlessness and ontological uncertainty: "There are no zones, ... no zones but the Zone" (388). Setting in *Gravity's Rainbow*, then supplies not the stability of a familiar environment, but the representation of a space and condition of indeterminacy with implications which extend into other categories of knowing. The zone of *Gravity's Rainbow* is not a setting wherein characters and events interact causally and develop into an evolving recognizable reality but the location in physical terms of a place where bizarre events of the plot are enacted to emphasize the ontological homelessness of European culture after the rocket. The generic requirements of the novel are fulfilled with the representation of a setting, although the setting itself emphasizes postmodern qualities in contemporary life. This fluidity of representation concerning the spatial setting of *Gravity's Rainbow* is echoed in the delineation of plot.

It is exceedingly difficult to outline the central plot or even plot lines of *Gravity's Rainbow*. Pynchon's is a novel which, as has already been noted, ranges across time and place, covering a panoply of topics ranging from the destruction of the Dodo in the seventeenth-century, through an account of the adventures of an adenoid and a light bulb and the imposition of a Latin alphabet on Kirghizian tribesmen to a frantic search for rocket technology. Historical, religious, technological, political, ethnic, geographical, military, linguistic and cultural forms of knowledge, among others, are all employed in the representation of the plot in *Gravity's Rainbow*. Nonetheless, out of this maelstrom of plots the central plot motif of the quest may be isolated. The quest, a plot structure common to both romance and the novel is conducted on two primary levels in *Gravity's Rainbow*. At the level of individual humans, numerous characters are depicted engaged in quests of private, existential motivation. Lieutenant Tyrone Slothrop, for instance, attempts to unearth the secrets of his childhood conditioning along with the seemingly related composition of the V2 rocket. On the more encompassing level of mass, cultural groupings, communities of humans are presented searching for means of ensuring the continuation of their collective destiny. The interaction of these groups is ensured by the attempt by allied intelligence to discover the reasons why Slothrop's erections consistently precede V2 rocket attacks. In both, the representation of the quest carries profound implications for Pynchon's postmodern culture. For western culture is shown in its social and historical development to advance inexorably to the V2 rocket, a symbol rich in associations with technological advancement and random death.

The bulk of the plot is enacted within the context of the closing months of World War II and the first months of the G-5's governance of the armistice. Placed firmly within the record of historical events, the fidelity of *Gravity's Rainbow* to detailed events of the war and period has been convincingly documented.[25] This historical accuracy of *Gravity's Rainbow* is instrumental in facilitating the representation of contemporary culture. Prominent here is the cultural condition of uncertainty and radical contingency born of the omnipresent spectre of instant death and destruction represented in the V2 rocket. In exploring this condition, common both to Pynchon's culture and the universe of the novel, *Gravity's Rainbow* utilizes the complete range of styles and narrative techniques available to the novel besides that of historical narrative.

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[25] See Steven Weisenburger, "The End of History? Thomas Pynchon and the Uses of the Past," in *Critical Essays on Thomas Pynchon*, ed., Richard Pearce, (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1981): 140-56.

Accordingly, Pynchon's novel partakes of the narrative conventions associated with historical reportage, romance, comic books, film, scientific theorems, jokes, songs, drug induced dreams, etc. to assist in the fullest representation of the chaotic and multi-faceted reality of the plot. Employing the novel form's elasticity of representational styles, *Gravity's Rainbow* shifts, for instance, from the unspeakable, uncontainable gravity of a concentration camp:

> While he lived, and drew marks on paper, this invisible kingdom had kept on, in the darkness outside...all this time...Pökler vomited. He cried some. The walls did not dissolve--no prison wall ever did, not from tears, not at this finding, on every pallet, in every cell, that the faces are ones he knows after all, and holds dear as himself, and cannot, then, let them return to that silence.... But what can he ever do about it? How can he ever keep them? Impotence, mirror-rotation of sorrow, works him terribly as runaway heartbeating, and with hardly any chances left him for good rage, or for turning.... (504-05)

to the comic seriousness of the simple maintenance of a garden where "Death is told so clearly to fuck off" (11). *Gravity's Rainbow* never solidifies in the use of a single narrative format but, rather, in the variability of its formal components, replicates the contingency which constitutes the thematic basis of the plot and the ontological condition of postwar reality. The inherent malleability of the novel form allows and contains this mixing of narrative types in a gesture representative of postmodern culture. Indeed, in serving the representation of postmodern reality, *Gravity's Rainbow* assimilates with the same degree of (un)certainty events of historical fact and examples of reality's bizarrer contours. In terms of thematic content and narrative form, then, the representation of plot in *Gravity's Rainbow* utilizes the flexibility of the novel form to depict the postmodern quantity and diversity of characters in the novel. As if to accentuate the multiplicity of postmodern reality, the novel includes over 400 figures most of whom hover in a status only marginally that of a "character." They develop no identifiable individuality in any conventional manner. Instead they populate the novel's multi-planed reality and heightens its qualities of uncertainty with their ontological opacity.

Those character who do possess individuality are themselves of unconfirmed status--socially and existentially. Many are represented as seekers and propel the novel's plot along in their quests for ontological certainty concerning their personal pasts and an understanding of the nature of the reality they tenuously inhabit. Edward Pointsman is obsessed with tracing in reality the certainty of a causal process, the law of cause and effect, stimulus and response. Roger Mexico, conversely, is concerned with the nebulous places between prefixed categories of reality "between the zero and the one" (63). Brigadier Pudding is mired in the corruption and death of his formative experiences on the battlefields of World War I. Tchitcherine, the Soviet operative, whose "real mission in the Zone is private, obsessive" (392) is consumed by the desire to capture his Herero half-brother. Enzian, Tchitcherine's half-brother and leader of the *Schwarzkommando*, has doubly uncertain ontological underpinnings. As leader of the *Schwarzkommando*, a group initially concocted by Allied propaganda officials as a fictitious group of African soldiers but later discovered to exist as a bizarre legacy of German colonialism, Enzian's sense of understanding as an individual and as the representative of a colonized tribe is intimately, though as yet unclearly, related to the rocket: "He was led to believe that by understanding the Rocket, he would come to understand truly his manhood" (377). His quest through the zone is to collect, assemble and fire a final rocket in an apocalyptic escape from Western history. Katje Borgesius, after repeatedly sublimating her true personality into assigned roles as sex slave, dominatrix and lover, has so fractured her self as to destroy it. Ever the object of desire, she is introduced to the narrative through the voyeuristic depersonalized lens of a hidden camera. Though conscious of her attractiveness, she is also aware of her own psychic corruption:

> At the images she sees in the mirror Katje also feels a cameraman's pleasure, but knows what he cannot : that inside herself, enclosed in the *soignée* surface of dear fabric and dead cells, she is corruption and ashes, she belongs in a way none of them can guess cruelly to the Oven...to *Der Kinderofen*...(109)

Tyrone Slothrop, the central protagonist, occupies the very centre of the novel's thematic core--the search for death as the goal and closure of Slothrop's personal development and the culmination of his society's socio-historical trajectory. Via the characterization of Slothrop, *Gravity's Rainbow* outlines the conditions of existence in a postmodern world according to the properties of representation made available by the novel. Tyrone Slothrop lives an "autonomous life of interiority," as per the requirements of the novel form, though it is a life profoundly conditioned by his circumambient world.

Slothrop's individuality is established by the unique and bizarre combination of personal experience and the effects of his family history--from Slothrop's first American ancestor to the machinations of his father who sold the infant Slothrop to Laszlo Jamf for psychological experimentation (333). This rootedness in his personal past and the causal effects it seems to have on his life's development corresponds to Slothrop's feelings of paranoia, the belief that everything which transpires in his environment is the result of an elaborate programme of manipulation. Conversely, however, Slothrop is also subject to a kind of anti-paranoia, the extreme splintering of his identity in response to the radical contingency of life in the Zone. Accordingly, Slothrop on numerous occasions takes on the identity of various figures, themselves characters of differing ontological status. He is "Ian Scuffing" a British war correspondent (298), *Raketmensch*, a heroic, comic-book figure (426), and *Plechazunga*, a pig-hero played by Slothrop in the ritual re-enactment of a pig's tenth-century salvation of a village faced by a Viking invasion (661). With each of these identities, Slothrop functions with an efficacy which comes not as a result of any intrinsic integrity between self and identity but because his surrounding community accepts him in these identities. The de-centred nature of Slothrop's character is indicative of the multiplicity and contingency of the Zone and, in turn, representative of the cultural setting of Pynchon's novel.

The figure of Slothrop is also indicative of the postmodern novel's use of character according to the representational capabilities of the novel and is representative of the depiction of other characters in *Gravity's Rainbow*. The novel employs character as a means of representing the conditions of life in its surrounding world. It sets individual characters in a point of maximal contact with their evolving reality and engages them in a search for totality and meaning. Tyrone Slothrop does precisely this in *Gravity's Rainbow*. He embarks upon a journey and quest which is simultaneously an investigation into the sources of his psychic nature and a search for knowledge concerning Western culture's most potent symbol of technological and social development. Slothrop is both unique and typical as are his experiences of life in the Zone. In his experiences and in the changing qualities of his own identity, Slothrop is expressive of the extreme uncertainty of being in a postmodern environment.

Character in the novel, besides being a vehicle for the physical and metaphoric representation of reality, is also a tool in the representation of language. Each character speaks the language of a socio-ideological position which, taken together, further represent the unity of positions which comprise the novel's cultural world. Language in the novel, of course, is much more than simply the depiction of an ideology; it is also, in its applications and usages, representative of the condition of life in the novel's setting. Given the postmodern setting of the production of Pynchon's novel and its thematic content of a culture at the verge of destruction, it is not surprising that language use in *Gravity's Rainbow* approximates that described by Bakhtin in "heteroglot eras:"

> It is precisely in the most sharply heteroglot eras, when the collision and interaction of languages is especially intense and powerful, when heteroglossia washes over literary language from all sides (that is, in precisely those eras that most conduce to the novel) that aspects of heteroglossia are canonized with great ease and rapidly pass from one language system to another: from everyday life into literary language, from literary language into the language of everyday, from professional jargon into more general use,

> from one genre to another and so forth. In this intense struggle, boundaries are drawn with new sharpness and simultaneously erased with new ease; it is sometimes impossible to establish precisely where they have been erased or where certain of the warring parties have already crossed over into alien territory.[26]

In the above quote, Bakhtin describes cultural conditions not unlike that of a Lyotardean account of postmodernism "where boundaries are drawn with new sharpness and simultaneously erased with new ease." In assessing the causal influence of language in this setting, Bakhtin pointedly asserts the appropriateness of the novel form. Precisely such conditions prevail in *Gravity's Rainbow* where Pynchon draws upon the novel's generic relationship with language to represent the ontological ambivalence of the postmodern age. This is done in both the novel's narrative use of language(s) and in the particular thematization of language as an affective force in social life.

Gravity's Rainbow astounds with its sheer abundance of language. The narrative is a polyglot representation of the profusion of competing languages and ideologies which is the condition and witness of postmodern culture. Apart from the presence of such national languages as Kirghiz, Japanese, German, Dutch, English Herero, French and Russian among others. There are regional and ethnic variants of these languages--from Afro-American English through received pronunciation English to such versions as the English spoken by Hungarians or the "redneck" Major Harvey. There are, as well, the languages of various ethical systems, professions and scientific approaches. Thus, *Gravity's Rainbow* itself functions as a boundaryless zone wherein these languages speak the multitude of socio-ideological voices which represent the heteroglossia of the postmodern era. Taken together these languages articulate a full cross-section of the socio-ideological positions available to Pynchon in depicting the reality of his culture via the novel form:

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[26] Mikhail M. Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination*, ed. M. Holquist, trans. C. Emerson and M. Holquist, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981): 418.

> The novel orchestrates all its themes, the totality of the world of objects and ideas depicted and expressed in it, by means of the social diversity of speech types and by the differing individual voices that flourish under such conditions. (Bakhtin: 1981, 263)

Gravity's Rainbow, then, employs the languages of various belief systems in the representation of the novel's plot and its supporting, external reality. Pynchon's novel also consists of the language of differing forms of and styles of aesthetic expression. This narrative use of language is, as well, a feature of the novel form and instrumental in the representation of his epoch. The vocabularies and languages of film, folk-tales, music, lyric poetry, pornography, limericks and songs augment the dominant prose of the narrative in the representation of the "Zone." This use of the language of differing aesthetic systems and styles is consistent with the novel's propensity to represent as full a range of styles and cultures as possible. Pynchon's use of the comic and comic language is ostensible in this fusion of high and low styles in *Gravity's Rainbow*. Pynchon's language is replete with vocabulary literally of the gutter, for example, as Pointsman lodges his foot in a toilet bowl, or Slothrop, under the influence of sodium amytal imagines his descent into the sewer system of New York through the very toilet both John F. Kennedy and Malcolm X defecated into. Later Slothrop will read the shit-stained rocket manuals discarded by the SS at the training site in Blizna.[27] Pig Bodine, in his disruption of a formal dinner, provides the example, *par excellence*, of the comic, alliterative use of language in the representation of low culture as an alternative to the hierarchical control of reality:

> Seamen Bodine is an unexpected bonus. Going in to dinner becomes a priestly procession, full of secret gestures and understandings. It is a very elaborate meal, according to the menu, full of relevés, poissons, entrements. 'What's this "Uberraschungbraten" here?' Seaman Bodine asks right-hand dinner companion Constance Flamp, loose-khakied newshound and toughtalkin' sweetheart of ev'ry GI from Iwo to Saint-Lô. ... 'No ketchup, no ketchup,' the hirsute bluejacket searching agitatedly among the cruets and salvers, 'seems to be no...what th'fuck kind of a place is this, *Rog*,' yelling down slantwise across seven enemy faces, 'hey, budd*ih* you find any *ketchup* down there?' ... 'Well I've got eyes for some of that rich, meaty smegma stew!' suggests Bodine, 'Or howbout a *clot*

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[27] Such are the facts of history woven by Pynchon into his narrative. David Irving, *The Mare's Nest*, (London: Kimber and Co., 1964) recounts how a Polish underground officer, operating on behalf of British intelligence, found a rocket test sheet disposed in a latrine by SS soldiers retreating in the face of Soviet advances.

> *casserole?'* ... 'We're doing the soup course, babe,' sez cool Seaman Bodine, 'so let me just suggest a canker consommé, or perhaps a barf bouillon.' (832-34)

In moments such as this, comic language rescues the characters from formalized, paranoic structures which constitute a form of death while utilizing the novel's ability to cross and mix categories of the representable.

The narrative use of language in *Gravity's Rainbow* thus stresses the variability of linguistic and stylistic codes and levels available to the novel. This facet of the novel is singularly relevant to *Gravity's Rainbow* and the representation of reality in the postmodern novel. For while emphasizing the radical diversity of language forms prevalent in the heteroglossia of postmodern culture, *Gravity's Rainbow* draws upon the generic qualities of the novel. It is not simply in the narrative use of language that *Gravity's Rainbow* accentuates the novel's adaptation to, and representation of, postmodern reality, however. For *Gravity's Rainbow* also thematizes the formative power of language in a manner concomitant with the ontological destability identifiable with postmodernism.

In *Gravity's Rainbow*, language is not depicted as the eternal and transcendent mediator between sign and signified, word and world. Instead language is depicted as a protean category dependent upon the varying use of humans to acquire meaning according to their communities and language games. Language is indeed influential, though never monolithic, and as such a factor in the ontological uncertainty of the "Zone." Slothrop, for instance, asserts his power as the Rocketman in the act of naming himself as such:

> 'Raketemensch!' screams Säure, grabbing the helmet and unscrewing the horns off of it. Names by themselves may be empty, but the *act of naming*.... (426)

Similarly, European culture's will to death in the creation of rockets is enacted in its act of naming those places where rockets would be housed. Through systems of language and the act of naming, reality is not merely identified but actively, sometimes randomly, created:

> There may be no gods, but there is a pattern: names by themselves may have no magic, but the *act* of naming, the physical utterance, obeys the pattern. Nordhausen means dwellings in the north. The Rocket had to be produced out of a place called Nordhausen. (374)

The ideological potential of language as a formative tool and the repository of culture is also emphasized in *Gravity's Rainbow*. For although randomly created, the meaning and power of language is awesome and, unfortunately, all too often conscripted into the dominant culture's will to power. Thus the Dodoes in seventeenth-century Mauritius are slaughtered because they have no language: "No language meant no chances of co-opting them in to ... Salvation" (128). Without language the Dodoes are bereft of reality and God to the logocentric colonizers. Similarly, Tchitcherine, entrusted to bring the latinized New Turkic Alphabet to Soviet Central Asia. Tchitcherine's mission is a success, though he comes to realize that the language of ideological power he has introduced will spell the end of a history encoded in a form of communication which "was purely speech, gesture, touch" (393):

> On sidewalks and walls the very first printed slogans start to show up, the first Central Asian fuck you signs, the first kill-the-police-commissioner signs (and somebody does! this alphabet is really something!) and so the magic that the shamans, out in the wind, have always known, begins to operate now to a political way, and Dzaqyp Qulan hears the ghost in his own lynched father with a scratchy pen in the night, practising As and Bs... (414)

In each of these instance, the formative power of language to create the reality of ideological power is emphasized. Language so thematized as ontologically baseless, though ideologically affective, corresponds to postmodernity's emphasis on language as a category which has expanded into a creative, rather than simply identifying, function. Thus with the proliferation of languages, *Gravity's Rainbow* represents the potential for a proliferation of realities.

Examination of the manipulation of time, space, setting, character and language, then, indicates that while retraining the generic feature of the novel form, *Gravity's Rainbow* adapts their presentation to comply with a representation of the postmodern culture which comprises the novel's socio-cultural setting. Postmodernism has been identified here as the condition and description of a state of profound ontological uncertainty. Given this condition, *Gravity's Rainbow* represents reality not as the totalized sum of varying, identifiable social, historical and psychological forces as in realism. *Gravity's Rainbow* does not encode reality with a specific ideological vision as in socialist realism. Neither is Pynchon's novel a depiction of epistemological doubt and the forging of the mythological reality of modernism. Rather, *Gravity's Rainbow* harnesses the flexibility of the novel form to represent a socio-cultural stage in the development of Western culture's understanding of reality. That this understanding of reality is consistently identified with death, destruction and cultural self-immolation is a further feature of postmodernism worthy of another form of analysis. The task of this chapter has not been to evaluate the ideological or ethical qualities of postmodernism, however, but rather to demonstrate the continued representation of cultural reality in the novel form. A future study could well begin with the premise that as artistic forms such as the novel continue to represent human reality the process has not stopped.

Conclusion

This study began by identifying its position in the shadow cast by Erich Auerbach's *Mimesis* and may justifiably conclude by signalling its hopes to have, in at least one sense, remained there. This is not merely a protestation of humility, but rather the identification of one of the primary conditions of preparing the present work and a central intention in its execution. Auerbach's study was identified early in the introduction as an investigation into the question of literature's relationship to reality conducted at the beginning of a historical period which would query the possiblity of posing such a question and protest the answering of it in a synthesis of some three thousand years of social and literary history. The postmodern, poststructuralist condition of literary studies, as well as culture, establishes a context suspicious of any attempt to posit fundamentals of literature's relationship to reality, especially when the categories of literature and reality themselves are the subject of much critical debate. The suspicion is justifiably raised when it would appear that the critical endeavour involves a return to some form of unproblematic mimesis, the re-establishment of a previously discarded understanding of literature's mirroring of reality. And finally, the attempt to effect this understanding within the scope of a transhistorical, transnational setting renders the entire enterprise doubly questionable. In spite of these difficulties and in part because of them, the need to formulate some form of understanding of the relationship between literature and reality seems pressing. For this relationship, which seems untenable according to some types of theoretical approach, nontheless persists in other theoretical conceptions of literature, not the least in "popular" understandings of literature's connection to reality. This is not even to probe fully the kind of relationship between literature and reality which must be assumed in politically or socially revisionist approaches to literature. In the face of the fragmentation which seems to be the present condition of artistic production and critical evaluation, then, Auerbach's work provides the example of a synthesis of understanding and an attempt to maintain a structure of critical continuity in the study of literature and its relationship to its social environment. And it is this aspect of Auerbach's work as much as its contents, which animates this inquiry into an old problem.

The old problem, the topic of this study, concerns the nature of the relationship between literature and reality. Although old, this problem has never remained static in either its configuration or in its ability to elicit varying responses, both of which have usually been addressed in historically changing conceptions of mimesis. As indicated above, some recent approaches to literature have sought to challenge the possibility of a linkage between literature and reality based on, first, an altered ontological understanding of literature and its constitution in a linguistic medium which reflects not reality but itself and second, the reliability of establishing such a category as reality, especially across changing historical and cultural settings. This state of affairs quite obviously conditions the range of possible approaches to the question of literature's connectedness to reality and had to be encountered in preparing this study.

Assuming that such a connection exists, there are a number of possible tacks to be set in confronting the issue. The first, and least attractive, would simply be to restate former values and approaches in the context of new challenges without forcefully questioning the underpinings of the older conception while criticizing the new.[1] A second approach would be to concentrate attention on developing a novel tactic, an attempt to posit an updated theoretical conception of mimesis in response to the newest and most challenging affront to the connectedness of literature and reality, postmodern fiction. Such was the strategy adapted by Jerry Varsava in *Contingent Meanings*, his attempt to stake out a new theoretical position for mimesis within postodern writing:

> That, indeed, is the object of this study--to transvalue the notion of mimesis, to free it from naive optic metaphors and insupportable totalizing visions, and to instill in it a vigor, a

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[1] Charles Newman, "The post-modern aura: the act of fiction in an age of inflation," *Salmagundi* 63/4 (1984): 3-199 provides one such example.

> phenomenological fullness that more completely describes the postmodernist's relationship to the world.[2]

A third means, the one adopted in this study, was to redevelop an older concept of mimesis into a newer understanding. This was attempted in order to retain the integrity of a former understanding of mimesis while simultaneously expanding its application into broader realms. This project involved the development of the term representation in replacement of the more limited concept mimesis. The advantages of this strategy to the present study were numerous. The central one being that it offered the opportunity to provide historical continuity from past understandings of the relationship between literature and reality in former literary and social contexts with more recent ones. This strategy immediately signaled the importance of the socio-historic context in any perception of literature's representation of reality and assumed that any approach which attempted to demonstrate the perennial connectedness of literature and reality would have to be cognicant of changing social and historic environments.

The decision to limit the field of inquiry to the twentieth-century was also related to the above general concerns for maintaining historical continuity while responding to the new in literature. The nineteenth-century, as a kind of pre-setting, offered a context wherein the critical and textual acceptance of mimesis seemed demonstrable in the movement of realism. Indeed, realism's identification with mimesis, however erroneous, is such that focused inquiry was required to separate the critical singularity of each. Besides identifying realism as a movement responsive to social and historical conditions of the nineteenth-century in a gesture which anticipated the later socio-historical description of socialist realism, modernism and postmodernism, this inquiry allowed for a review of mimesis as a concept with perennial applicability though nonetheless subject to historical change. Furthermore, it was possible to isolate and address three central theoretical approaches to mimesis, only one of which outright refutes the possibility of a representational relationship between literature and reality. This approach, which disputes even the potentiality of literature's representation of reality based upon a perception of language as entirely self-referential, was acknowledged as a possible though limited approach to mimesis. Instead, the principles identified in mimesis, along with the particular example of realism, were proposed as the basis for representation, a concept which accepts the perennial connectedness of literature and reality while allowing for differing forms of expression given differing socio-historic settings. The response to the particular issue of language's referential character was forestalled until the ensuing chapter where a reply, grounded on the understanding of language as a communally based system of reference, was forwarded. Indeed, this understanding of language as communally based system harmonized with the idea that the novel also changes in form according to its role in the larger, literary systems of signification that social, ideological and historical groupings establish.

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[2] Jerry A. Varsava, *Contingent Meanings. Postmodernist Fiction, Mimesis, and the Reader*, (Tallahassee: The Florida State University Press, 1990). 2.

A further means of delimiting the scope of the problem of literature's representation of reality was found to reside in isolating the particular type of literature discussed. In this study "literature" was confined, for all intents and purposes, to the novel. Different genres and generic conventions assume differing representational relationships to reality. A descriptive definition of the *familial* features of the novel form was shown to indicate the means by which the novel represents reality in a manner which is generically constant though subject to identifiable alterations in response to differing cultural contexts. One of those familial features, as noted above, is the particularly novelistic use of language. The four others discussed relate to the depiction of time, space, character and plot in the novel. Each remains a feature of the novel form capable of adaptation to changing external requirements, ensuring the novel's continued though ever changing representation of evolving reality.

With the representational qualities of the novel established, it was necessary to proffer some form of understanding of reality and the novel's relationship to it as both product and producer of that reality. Relatedly, it was necessary to establish principles of literary history which could be repeatedly used in documenting the novel's changing, though essentially constant, representation of reality. If the novel is ever an artifact of its cultural and historical setting, then the process of establishing the connection between individual novels and their environment ought to be subjectable to duplication in the examination of other novels. The repeatability of these principles within an approach to the historical and social analysis is thus of paramount importance and called for a system which was at once flexible and verifiable. As this methodology was designed as generalized tool of critical study, intended for application to various texts in differing contexts, it was required to remain more descriptive than prescriptive. Thus, the method outlined in chapter three does not attempt to prescribe the relationship between literature and reality in terms of strict homologies between social structures, themselves identified in prescriptive ideological concepts, and literary structures. To momentarily develop a specific, though randomly chosen, example, this study does not posit an all-embracing relationship between market economies and postmodernism. The culture of market capitalism may certainly play a formative role in the configuration of postmodern novels, though it is not the only influence as may be evinced by the fact that differing types of postmodernist novel exist, some which revel in the effects of capitalist culture and others which seem to exist outside of it. Rather than attempt to isolate all inclusive sources for the novel's relatedness to its circumambient reality, then, this study sought to develop means for describing differing forms of relationship between the novel and reality according to divergent expressions of the novel in changing social and historical environments.

In demonstrating the validity of this study's conception of representation and the methodology forwarded to establish it in specific novels, three examples were chosen: Maxim Gorky's *Mother*, James Joyce's *Ulysses* and Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*. The novels studied were proposed as representative texts of their social and historical environments, with these environments expressed here as the socio-historic movements socialist realism, modernism and postmodernism. These three particular combinations of novel and movement were chosen for specific reasons.

Each movement conformed to the requirements of a methodology of literary history developed in chapter three as an identifiable type of "community of discourse," to re-employ Dominick LaCapra's term. For purposes of illustration, these movements are useful as categories within the literary system which simultaneously function as broader ideological categories with a socio-cultural identity and generally recognized historical boundaries. Where the historical placement of these movements was problematic, this study was allowed the opportunity to examine the manner in which such movements are provided historical parameters. This in itself is a process in which literature plays a formative role and which assumes literature's connectedness to reality as both the product and producer of social and ideological settings. The examination of these three prominent movements also provided a measure of historical continuity in an extension from the earlier discussion of nineteenth-century realism and mimesis. Maxim Gorky's *Mother* of 1906, while written on the basis of an ostensibly realist paradigm, inaugurates, in its own way, a century of transformations to the novel's representation of reality as a result of the twentieth-century's changing socio-historic forces.

The movements of socialist realism, modernism and postmodernism were, obviously, not the only forms of communities of discourse which could have been studied. Just as this was not the only category derived from chapter three's principles of literary history which could have been emphasized in demonstrating the novel's representation of reality. Indeed, it is to be hoped that the principles outlined in this study and the methodology employed in demonstrating them could be profitably applied to more diverse expressions of the novel's connection to reality. Other "communities of discourse," from explicitly socio-political programmes to uniquely aesthetic movements, have their social and cultural goals and ideology depicted in novels which, apart from being texts of aesthetic value, are necessarily representations of their environment. This study has indicated the manner in which the novel's representation of reality is assured in literary production and has demonstrated the form of this representation in three specific examples. It is hoped that this form of demonstration is repeatable in a process which will affirm not only the novel's representation of reality in an abstract manner, but stand in affirmation of the evolving diversity of both literature and culture.

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